

3 suspects in kidnap-slay of Coke executive seized

Story Below, Col. 1

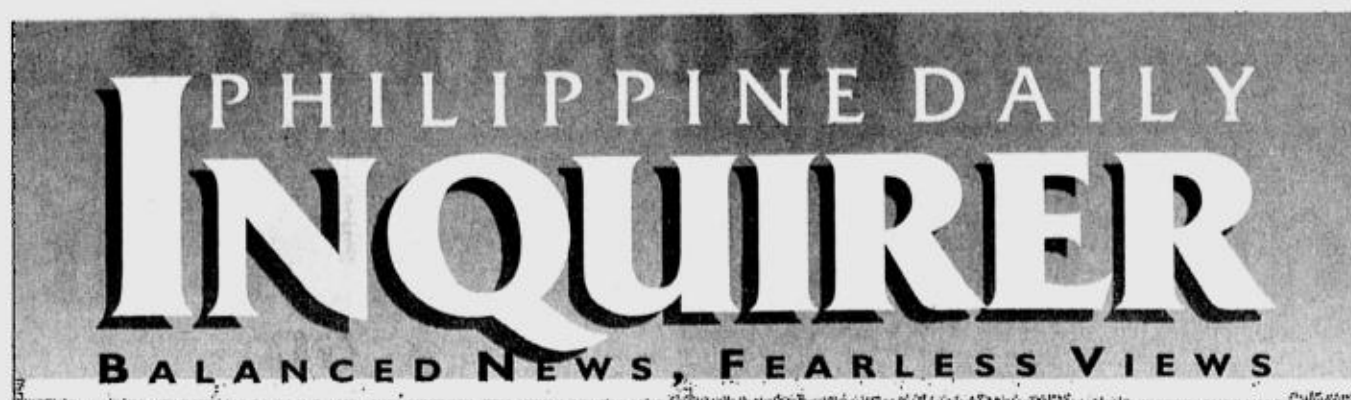
Palace woos Lopezes for the 'dream team'

By Carlito Pablo

THE KEY to clinching the GMA-Kabayan "dream team" is in the hands of Sen. Noli de Castro's boss Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III, chair of the powerful ABS-CBN media group.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has des-

PALACE/A6



Dec. 24, 26, Jan. 2
are non-working days

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A LONG Christmas break awaits government and private sector employees after Malacanang yesterday declared Dec. 24 and 26, and Jan. 2 next year as special non-working days.

Proclamation No. 503, issued by Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo by au-

DEC. 24/A6

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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★★★

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P15

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Loren set to fight Noli

Race for vice president shaping up as a battle of ABS-CBN stars

Erap torn between ma, US operation

By Armand N. Nocum and Juliet L. Javellana

"THIS is my greatest dilemma," former President Joseph Estrada said. "Should I leave my 98-year-old mother to undergo operation for my knees in the United States, or should I stay close to her in what could be her last days?"

Estrada yesterday told the INQUIRER he might yet forgo surgery in the United States even after months of seeking permission for it.

To help make up his mind, Estrada asked Dr. Antonio Calanoc, orthopedic and spine surgeon at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center, to check his condition again last night. Calanoc warned that the ex-President was not getting better.

"Now it feels like electric current passes through my knees and hips," said Estrada. His doctors earlier said the ousted president faced possible paralysis from the waist down due to "multiple slipped discs at the lumbar section," aggravated by his arthritic knees.

If allowed, Estrada would rather leave after the presidential elections in May 2004. But he had a bigger problem, he said: "My mother's health is also fast deteriorating. She is always crying. I send her food, but she says she just wants to be with me."

Estrada lawyer Larry Hocson said Doña Mary was bedridden and had developed three abdomi-

ERAP/A22



"HEROES' hero," Cardinal Sin is hailed by former Presidents Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos during rites of tribute to the longest-serving archbishop of Manila at the Edsa Shrine on Wednesday, two days before his retirement.

EDWIN BACASMAS

THE MAN who toppled two presidents of this country was his vintage self during ceremonies to honor his 29 years of service as the archbishop of Manila.

"I am retiring but I am not keeping quiet. You cannot stop me from speaking," Jaime Cardinal Sin said yesterday at the Edsa Shrine two days before his retirement.

It was the prelate, who, during four days in February, 1986 first sounded the clarion

call for people to come to Edsa to defend the military faction led by Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile and Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, which had broken away from the martial rule of President Ferdinand Marcos.

"Can you imagine what would have happened to them (Ramos and Enrile) and us if Cardinal Sin had just chosen to play it safe and keep quiet?" former President Cory

Aquino said in the course of her remarks paying tribute to the cardinal.

Sin became Manila archbishop in 1974 at the height of martial law.

It was also in Edsa where Sin rallied thousands in January, 2001 to force out then President Joseph Estrada for charges of alleged massive corruption.

Sin was hailed as the heroes' hero by for-

SIN/A4

One is enough, 2 too much under new Church rules

By Martin P. Marfil

ONE is enough; two is too much.

Under a new set of guidelines issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, a priest found to have fathered a child would be meted out sanctions but would not be automatically defrocked.

But a priest who has fathered two children would be immediately asked to leave the Church "no matter what the excuses are," outgoing CBCP president Archbishop Orlando Quevedo told reporters on Tuesday night.

The CBCP released the set of guidelines on sexual misconduct among

priests, months after scandals involving two bishops rocked the Catholic Church in the Philippines. All the bishops were directed to discuss the guidelines with priests under their jurisdiction.

The guidelines contained in an 18-page document, "Pastoral Guidelines on Sexual

ONE/A4

3 suspects in kidnap-slay of Coke exec held

SUSPECTS in the kidnap-murder of Betti Chua Sy, Ernesto Palla and Ramon Dimol, are arrested in Cavite. (Below) Angelo Reyes is under intense pressure to solve the "worst abduction" of 100 cases so far this year.

JOAN BONDOC



By Christian V. Esguerra

UNDER intense pressure to solve the crime fast, the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force headed by Angelo Reyes yesterday announced the arrest of three suspects in the abduction and murder of Coca-Cola executive Betti Chua Sy.

Combined operatives of the Parañaque and Cavite police seized Ernesto Palla and Ramon Dimol from a house at Block 114, Lot 18, Heritage Homes, Barangay Gregorio, in Trece Martirez at around noon. Two other suspects, Palla's daughter Edith Palla Alesar and a certain Babes, remain at large.

Senior Supt. Ronald Estilles, Parañaque police chief, yesterday said Alesar and Babes were the ones who received Sy and her abductors in Cavite on Monday night.

The surrender of Romeo Vallano to Parañaque police on Tuesday night led to the arrest of Palla and Dimol, according to the Parañaque police chief. Estilles said the suspects were members of the Waray kidnap-for-ransom gang.

"He said he turned himself in because his conscience was bothering him," Estilles told the INQUIRER, referring to Vallano who admitted that he had driven the

3 SUSPECTS/A8

Reyes dared to prove his competence

By Christian V. Esguerra

SO how fares former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes in his new role as the government's main man against kidnap gangs?

Senate President Franklin Drilon holds him "responsible" for the government's failure to stop the increasing number of kidnapping incidents and dared him to "prove his worth."

"The brutal slaying of Ms Sy

and the increasing incidence of kidnapping cases should serve as challenge to (Reyes) to prove his competence," Drilon said. "He must either shape up or ship out."

Pressed by an outraged public to produce results as soon as possible, Reyes, as the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force chief, constantly rattled police officers into arresting those behind the grisly crime, according to a ranking of-

REYES/A8



Pinoys sing 'My Way' amid Iraq gunfire

By TJ Burgonio

WHEN you hear strains of Frank Sinatra's "My Way" rising above the crack of gunfire and the din of explosions in the middle of the Iraqi desert, you can be sure there are Filipino peacekeepers nearby.

Members of the 96-strong Filipino peacekeeping force in war-torn Iraq are turning to videoke singing to keep their spirits high amid the escalating attacks on coalition forces.

"We brought along our

PINOYS/A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Bicol Region and Eastern Visayas. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rains. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/20/03

Second FRONT PAGE

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Marikina	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laos	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Widespread Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Catapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Strong quake kills baby in Samar

BORONGAN, Eastern Samar—A five-month-old baby was killed and five persons were injured when a strong earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 earthquake struck Eastern Visayas early yesterday.

The offshore temblor's epicenter was about 70 km northeast of Borongan, the provincial capital of Eastern Samar, said the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The earthquake, which struck at 1:14 a.m., was felt as far away as Surigao City, some 300 km from the epicenter.

The town of Can-avid, about 53 km north of Borongan, sus-

tained the most damage from the tremor.

Can-avid Mayor Gil Norman Germino, describing the quake as the "strongest [to have hit the town] in eight years," estimated the damage to property and infrastructure at P10 million.

He identified the lone fatality as Marvin Laguina, a five-month-old baby. His mother Juliana, 36, suffered head injuries and was

brought to the Eastern Samar Provincial Hospital in Borongan.

Bobby Caniete, Phivolcs acting chief in Palo, Leyte, said the tremor registered at intensity 5 in Catbalogan town and Calbayog City, both in Samar; and intensity 4 in Catarman, Northern Samar, and in Palo and Tacloban City in Leyte.

Caniete said his office recorded five aftershocks between 1:15 a.m. and 8 a.m.

Juliana was the caretaker of a house in Can-avid's Barangay 9 where she and her baby were sleeping when the tremor struck.

A portion of the wall collapsed on the mother and child.

The four others who were injured were hit by collapsing walls and furniture. They were identified as Ronald Portesa, 26; Cinderella Grata, 10; Syllie Heboyon, 16, and Merlyn Bantayan, 32.

Germino said about 200 houses were damaged while the highway leading to and from the town sustained some cracks. He said the approach of the Can-avid bridge sank by five inches.

Local disaster officer Luisito Moscosa said the town's public market also collapsed, electric

posts fell and roads cracked.

All classes were suspended in Can-avid as the Department of Public Works and Highways also declared two buildings of the Can-avid Central Elementary School as unusable. The school's concrete gate was also destroyed.

The Can-avid State College as well as its administration building, library, college department building, science building and conference hall were also damaged.

Three electric posts of the Eastern Samar Electric Cooperative (Esamelco) were knocked down,

cutting off the power supply in the entire province. Power resumed at 5:40 p.m. yesterday.

Adriano Fuego, the director of the Office of the Civil Defense for Eastern Visayas, said the earthquake caused a landslide in barangay Binaluan in Taft town, Eastern Samar.

The landslide caused some transportation delays.

A report was also received that a portion of the wall and roof of the Marcelino Libanan gym in Oras town, Eastern Samar had collapsed. **Eden B. Cidro and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau**

SC ruling on Marcos 'loot' a closure—GMA

By Philip C. Tubeza and Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the Supreme Court's ruling with finality that the \$683 million Swiss deposits of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos were ill-gotten will provide "closure" on one of the issues dividing the nation.

"This is part of national consolidation and reconciliation as we heal the wounds of the past and move forward to a brighter future," the President said in a statement.

The President said she believes that reconciliation will not be achieved if there is no closure on past divisions.

Ms Macapagal has launched a "total reconciliation" program, reaching out to the Marcoses, the groups of ousted president Joseph Estrada, businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, rebel groups and her political foes.

"The Supreme Court ruling is a victory of the Filipino people," she said, adding that the recovered Marcos assets would be used to compensate human rights victims and for "the continuing quest of social justice."

She said the money, once transferred to the National Treasury, will be used to fund land reform and other programs for farmers.

She has promised that P8 billion would be set aside to compensate human rights victims of the Marcos regime while Congress deliberates the passage of a compensation bill for them.

Malacañang could not say when the government can get possession of the \$683 million which is held in an escrow account at the Philippine National Bank but actually deposited in several Singapore banks.

Martial law victims in the House of Representatives yesterday lauded the Supreme Court decision but expressed fear that the money might be used in next May's elections.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the money could fall into the wrong hands, including groups that are scheming to settle out of court with the Marcoses.

Ocampo is the principal author of a bill seeking to set aside P10 billion from the \$683 million to compensate the 9,539 human rights victims who won a judgment against the Marcoses in the Hawaii District Court in 1992.

The bill would amend the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, which provides that recovered Marcos assets are to be used exclusively for the funding of the agrarian reform program.

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said the House should now pass the compensation law, now on second reading, to fully implement the Supreme Court decision.

The proposed claimants' bill provides for the establishment of a separate account to ensure that the money is not used for other purposes, and the setting up of an independent institution to ensure the Marcos victims will be given just and adequate compensation.



THREE HEADS are better than one, or so shows this photo of President Macapagal-Arroyo in a huddle with North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. JERRY CARUALPOPO/MALACAÑANG

US troops may help AFP fight terrorists, says GMA

PIKIT, North Cotabato—President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday that United States troops may help Philippine forces fight armed Islamic militants in Mindanao.

The President revived the idea of joint military exercises with the US when she arrived here with US Pacific Command chief Admiral Thomas Fargo and the North Cotabato governor Emmanuel Piñol.

The President, speaking before an audience of 4,000 farmers, suggested that Piñol talk to Fargo about holding the Balikatan joint exercises in the province, which she said she knew the governor to be advocating.

Ms Macapagal, a staunch ally of US President George Bush's war on terror, met this week with Cofer Black, the US State Department's antiterrorism coordinator, who expressed concern over the activities across Southeast Asia of the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group behind the deadly Bali bombing last year.

Fargo arrived on Tuesday to discuss the holding of joint military exercises to flush out the Jemaah Islamiyah operatives, among other issues, Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in Manila.

The President last month declared the JI as the Philippines' top national security threat.

The US-based Washington Post reported recently the continued training of JI operatives in a Mindanao camp set up three years ago under the protection of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front with which the govern-

ment is holding preparatory peace talks.

A series of police raids in Cotabato City last month led to the arrest of an alleged top Indonesian JI operative, Taufek Refke, and the discovery of a suspected hideout and bomb-making equipment.

"There are some JI operatives who are still in the country and they are being hunted by the government. We are keeping them on the run so they cannot consolidate to plot out large-scale terrorist actions," the President said on Tuesday.

"These JI cells are at times given free passage by low-level armed groups and we have asked the MILF leadership to ostracize and isolate the terrorists," she said.

But Ermita said that "in all likelihood" the joint military exercises in Mindanao would not push through this year because talks over rules of engagement had bogged down.

Joint military exercises, code-named Balikatan (Shoulder to Shoulder), were held on Basilan island last year in which small units of US Special Forces trained Filipino troops fighting the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang.

The two governments had planned to expand the antiterrorist training outside Basilan and into other areas of Mindanao such as Sulu this December.

But talks over the so-called terms of reference broke down over Philippine resistance to allowing US troops to assume a combat role. **AFP and TJ Burgonio**

Solons dismiss 1st impeachment rap

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE HOUSE committee on justice has voted 46-6-2 in favor of dismissing the first impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide and eight other justices of the Supreme Court filed by former President Joseph Estrada.

In a meeting yesterday approving the preliminary report dismissing the complaint, Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan, committee chair, said the final outcome of the voting on the report reflected the anti-impeachment sentiment in the committee.

The committee said that while the complaint was sufficient in form, it was, however, insufficient in substance.

Libanan, a member of the Nationalist People's Coalition which had pushed for the impeachment, expressed confidence that the committee ruling would be upheld in plenary voting.

"We've the record that in all impeachment cases, we were always upheld and sustained by the plenary," Libanan said.

He said he was hoping that the committee report would not be overturned once it reaches the plenary.

Libanan, however, said they were expecting a worst-case scenario in the plenary voting in which the committee decision would be overturned and the report would be returned to the committee for formal hearing and investigation.

No rallies today

By Margaux C. Ortiz

PLANS of another massive rally in Makati City were put on hold yesterday when Mayor Jejomar Binay denied protesters' requests to stage another demonstration on Ayala Avenue today.

Binay, in a phone interview with the INQUIRER, said the city government had to ask anti-administration groups to defer their plans for this week because the "city needs a breather."

"There should be no more rallies for this week. The protesters should allow the Central Business District to recover from last week's massive demonstration and violent dispersal," Binay said.

The mayor added that the leaders of the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) and Alternatiba, who requested for a rally permit earlier in the week, agreed to postpone their plans.

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Japan to probe reports of WWII holdouts in RP

TOKYO—Japan will send government officials to the Philippines Thursday to investigate unconfirmed reports that a few Japanese soldiers are still hiding out in the jungle, refusing to surrender after World War II.

The mission, involving three researchers of the Health and

Welfare Ministry, will search jungles of Luzon during a week-long investigation, a ministry official said Wednesday.

"We have received information that a former Japanese soldier had lived in a village in the suburb of Manila, pretending to be a local resident, and the man apparently

contacted a few Japanese still hiding in a jungle before he died in 1996," the official said.

The mission also includes two former Japanese soldiers who surrendered in Philippine jungles and were sent back to Japan after the end of World War II.

If the reports prove true, it

would be the first confirmation of Japanese holding out since 1974, when a former Imperial Army second lieutenant, Michio Onoda, returned to Japan after surviving for three decades in a jungle having refused to surrender. Onoda surrendered to then President Ferdinand Marcos.

But the ministry official played down the latest reports.

"There are many Japanese soldiers still living in areas where they were deployed and decided to stay on as local residents after World War II," the official said.

"Even if the reports are correct, the chances are high that the men

made their own decision to stay there and lead a normal life together with local people, which is different from a stunning holdout with a rifle," the official said.

Some 4,000 Japanese soldiers reportedly refused to surrender and decided to go into jungles in the Philippines after the end of the war. AFP

NEW EXTRADITION BID

DOJ calls on Nida's daughter to cooperate

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE Undersecretary Ma. Mercedes Gutierrez yesterday called on Kaye Torres, the daughter of murdered actress Nida Blanca, to work with the justice department so they can file a stronger second petition for the extradition of suspect Rod Lauren Strunk from the United States.

"We should meet so that she would be with us from the start of the preparations," Gutierrez told reporters but denied having sent an emissary to Torres.

Torres and her lawyer Harriet Demetriou earlier accused the justice department and National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco of mishandling the first extradition request resulting in its being junked by a California judge last week.

Gutierrez said the NBI was already collecting additional evidence and statements from witnesses for a new extradition appeal.

Jeffrey Cole, the US legal attaché, told the Department of Justice on Tuesday it would be better to file a new extradition bid rather than appeal to the Sacramento judge, Gregory Hollows, who dismissed the first petition. It is thought that a new petition may well end up with a different magistrate.

Gutierrez said there is no prescription period for the re-filing of the extradition petition.

"We are gathering more evidence and statements so that our request, which we know is already strong, would become stronger when we re-file it," Gutierrez said.

She called on the Blancas' close friends to come forward and tell everything they know about the actress' murder on Nov. 7, 2001 at the Atlanta Center building in San Juan.

Gutierrez said that prosecutors believe that Blanca's close friends have not told investigators everything they know about the killing.

"I hope that all those who love Nida Blanca who know something will come forward," she said.

Gutierrez also said that the DOJ is now preparing a report to Malacañang to explain what went wrong in the first extradition petition.

President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered DOJ Secretary Simeon Datumanong on Tuesday to explain what happened after Torres and Demetriou complained that the government did not show any interest in pursuing the case.

Gutierrez and Wycoco insist that they were not negligent and that they did their best. Demetriou has asked both officials to resign.

4,000 join PDI Readers Club

MORE than 4,000 young readers nationwide have registered for the INQUIRER Readers Club (IRC) through the Philippine Daily Inquirer's "What's News" Text Game, which ran from July 27 to Sept. 24. The 4,052 teenagers who registered can avail themselves of various benefits and discounts from partner establishments.

The campaign, which was conducted in coordination with Inq7.Net, Sony Ericsson Philippines and GMA Network, attracted more than 22,705 participants nationwide in two months. With the support of radio, television, cinema and print, the campaign generated interest among a predominantly young market (39 percent) below the age of 18, 32 percent from the 18-24 age bracket, 25 percent from the 25-31 bracket, and 4 percent from the 32-38 set).

The Grand Raffle Draw was televised over GMA-7 during the program "Love to

Love" on Oct. 12.

The winner was Ruelle Albert Castro, 25 years old from Sampaloc, Manila, who won the prized "techie" package composed of a Fujitsu LifeBook P1120, Palm Zire 71, Pioneer DVD Mini Compo, Sony television set, Sony Cybershot camera, and a Sony Ericsson T310 with CommuniCam.

There were 35 consolation prize winners who will each receive P10,000 cash. A total of 60 Sony Ericsson T100 cellular phones were won in the daily draw, half of which have been claimed.

Aside from perks from partner establishments, IRC members will also get special privileges at INQUIRER-spearheaded youth events.

After a long verification process, the final and confirmed list of winners of the INQUIRER's What's News Text Game will be announced in a print ad this weekend. Inquiries may be made at tel. no. 897-88-08 loc. 238 or 209.

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OPENING HOURS
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8:00AM-7:00PM SATURDAY: 8:00AM-5:00PM

Sin: Retired but not silent

From page A1

mer Presidents Aquino and Ramos and former Senate President Jovito Salonga.

Along with Sin, Ms. Aquino led the first popular revolt in Edsa that led to the downfall of the Marcos regime in 1986.

It was Sin who was a key player in making sure Ms. Aquino assumed the presidency after Marcos amid the military's own manipulative designs on the seat of power.

Ramos, a Protestant, said that he hoped that "(Sin) will continue to be the conscience of the nation even after his retirement.

Salonga, another Protestant, hailed Sin as "a living testimony to the true meaning of religion."

True friend

Sin was the man who made her husband, former senator Benigno Aquino Jr., feel like "the proudest Filipino" for being considered the archbishop's friend, Ms. Aquino recalled.

Quoting from her husband's letter to Sin in 1979, Ms. Aquino said that Sin came into her husband's life "at the nadir of (his) adversity" and proved that he was a true friend.

It was Sin who administered the anointing of the sick to the former senator in 1975 while he was on a 30-day hunger strike. The opposition leader, Marcos' biggest critic, was assassinated in 1983.

7 coup attempts

During her term as president, Ms. Aquino said she relied on the prayers and support of Cardinal Sin. She survived seven coup attempts.

Sin, who suffers from kidney problems and diabetes, turned 75 last Aug. 31. He ends his service tomorrow. He will be replaced by Lipa Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales.

"I am retiring but I will not stop serving. You cannot stop me from loving and serving you... I will be here. I will stay here. Do not be afraid," Sin said in his speech yesterday.

Villa San Miguel

Sin said the Pope's acceptance of his resignation would give him more time to talk with God and "chat leisurely" with the people.

"I will continue living in Villa San Miguel, only a few kilometers from here. You can count on me. Now I will visit you more often because I



AILING, Sin says he will continue to be an activist advocate for democracy.

EDWIN BACASMAS

have more time. I have less office work," an obviously jovial Sin said.

Salonga said Sin's guidance did not end with his role in Edsa 1, but his moral suasion encouraged former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson to bare all and testify against Estrada that led to his ouster in Edsa II.

Critics

"Jaime Cardinal Sin did not organize a political party or adopt a program of government; neither did he endorse any economic plan nor initiate a political career.

But Cardinal Sin has a very keen moral sense—the sense of right and wrong—which transcends all religious barriers and social and

political differences," Salonga said.

Although revered nationwide, Sin has come under severe criticism from Estrada supporters, mostly the poor, for ousting their idol.

After tens of thousands of Estrada's followers stormed the presidential Palace on May 1, 2001, the cardinal issued an unprecedented apology to the poor.

He acknowledged that the church had neglected them, making them easy prey for powerful people with their own agendas. He offered reconciliation and assured the poor the church is not "anti-Estrada, but pro-morality."

Asked once how he wished to be remembered, "As a happy priest," was his cheerful reply. *Blanche Rivera, with a report from AP*

One is enough, 2 too much under new Church rules

From page A1

harassed his secretary.

Abuses and Misconduct by the Clergy," also dealt with homosexual acts.

A priest found committing homosexual acts would be sent to a rehabilitation center run by the Church, but if the offense was repeated the erring priest would be expelled at once, the guidelines said.

Only for RP clergy

The new CBCP policy is to take effect immediately, but it will not cover previous offenses. The guidelines, which do not need the approval of the Vatican, will cover only the clergy in the Philippines.

The CBCP began drafting the guidelines in 1995, but it was forced to come up with the protocol in September after two prominent bishops earlier this year were embroiled in sex scandals.

Bishop Crisostomo Yalung, head of the archdiocese of Antipolo, quit the clergy after fathering two children in Antipolo. The Vatican also removed Bishop Teodoro Bacani, head of the diocese of Novaliches and spiritual adviser of the El Shaddai movement, amid allegations that he sexually

One strike

During discussions by the country's 100 or so bishops, former CBCP president Oscar Cruz proposed a "one strike and you're out" policy.

Quevedo said the proposal, which would have resulted in the expulsion of priests who have fathered a child, was turned down by the bishops.

Under the new guidelines, a victim of sexual abuse may file a complaint against any priest. Bishops, in turn, have blanket authority on how to deal with the erring priest.

Vatican appeal

Any priest accused of sexual misconduct, however, may elevate his case to the Vatican.

For the first time last year, the Church publicly apologized for sexual abuses committed by Filipino priests, but insisted that a majority of clergymen remained faithful to their vows.

Church officials admitted that some 200 priests had been investigated for sexual misconduct over the past 20 years. Some were dismissed, while most resigned voluntarily. *With a report by AFP*

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GLX Diesel	705,000	106,000	27,755	18,854	15,021
GLS Sport Gas MT	740,000	116,000	29,133	20,849	16,021
GLS Sport Diesel	755,000	124,000	29,723	21,263	17,157
GLS Sport Gas AT	803,000	123,000	31,613	22,614	18,248
Super Sport Gas AT	840,000	128,000	33,069	23,656	19,088
Grand Sport Diesel	893,000	155,000	35,838	26,037	20,687
Grand Sport Gas AT	933,000	149,000	37,444	26,785	21,613

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GLX Gas	327,500	27,392	18,647	14,922	10,675	8,613
GLX Diesel	352,500	29,375	19,538	15,674	11,213	9,048
GLS Sport Gas MT	370,000	30,833	20,838	16,679	11,931	9,627
GLS Sport Diesel	375,000	31,458	21,004	17,287	12,365	9,978
GLS Sport Gas AT	401,500	33,458	22,306	17,950	12,869	10,384
Super Sport Gas AT	420,000	35,000	23,333	18,767	13,418	10,827
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Pinoy takes seat today as Seattle city councilor

By Percy D. Della
Correspondent

SACRAMENTO, California—David Della's election as councilor of Seattle, Washington will be made official Wednesday (Thursday in Manila), making the 48-year-old son of Ilocano immigrants the only Filipino to serve in a big city council in the mainland United States.

Della's feat in a David-Goliath match with incumbent Heidi Willis on Nov. 4, is sure to challenge compatriots in California—the state considered as the bellwether for political empowerment of Filipino Americans in the nation.

California has more Filipino-Americans—about one million—compared to 60,000 or so in Washington State. But Golden State Pinoy, unlike their compatriots in Washington and Hawaii, still have to produce a big city mayor, council member or state assembly person of their own.

Final vote totals to be certified by Washington's Secretary of State will show that Della, whose parents came from Ilocos Sur, garnered more than 54 percent of the votes to Willis' 45.8 percent. When translated to votes, Della beat the incumbent by less than 10,000 votes.

The erstwhile labor leader and currently executive of United Way, a charitable organization, will represent the people of Central Seattle—where he was born and raised. He becomes the first Filipino council member in Seattle's history since Delores Sibonga was appointed, and then elected, to the city council seat in the early '80s.

Della's triumph not only resulted from a campaign that hammered his opponent's oversight of City Light—Seattle's version of the Manila Electric Company—during a period in which the utility raised rates by 58 percent. His victory proved to be the outcome of his *kababayans'* flair for grass roots campaigning reminiscent of small town politicking in the Philippines.

While Willis, who collected almost \$258,000 in campaign contributions—more than any council candidate in Seattle history—purchased radio and TV time to win votes, Della's supporters went straight to the electorate.

Eschewing expensive broadcast time, Della's people invited prospective voters of all races and their checkbooks to barbecues, dinner dances, basketball games, karaoke singing and even breakfasts with a Filipino favorite—the *tapsilog* (short for a beef jerky/fried rice/egg combo).

Such a show of unity behind Della's candi-

dacy and his friends' down-to-earth fun on the hustings will be the envy of Fil-Am communities all over America. The experience drew praise from grizzled politicians of Seattle, one of America's top 20 cities in terms of population and among the 10 top most livable cities in the continental United States. It is a gateway port for Asian destinations, including the Philippines.

Two of these jaded politicians—former Mayor Norm Rice and State Rep. Velma Veloria, a Filipino American serving in the Washington state house, endorsed Della, who served as Rice's deputy chief of staff. The Filipino candidate also received endorsements from the Pacific Northwest's biggest newspapers—the Seattle Times and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

A familiar face in the Filipino community and something of a legend among cannery workers as a crusading union leader, Della paid tribute to the grass roots effort. David and his lawyer wife Odette, who co-chaired his campaign said:

"We are very proud of our Filipino community—all of you who have been the backbone of this campaign from the start. Thank you for your faith, commitment, generous contributions and hard work."

"Looks like Filipinos voted this time," noted Manny Divina, head of the influential Filipino American Political Action Group of Washington—a group that played a pivotal role in getting out the vote for David.

"The (Filipino volunteers) did a great job," added Ellen Abellera, chief of the Washington governor's liaison office with Asian Americans.

Along with Willis two other incumbents went down to defeat, rocking the city's political establishment. The last time three council incumbents were ousted in a single election was 1935.

Laws on gay rights urged

By Jerome Aning

TAKE care of gays and lesbians, Germany's top human rights official has urged the Philippine government.

Gaudia Roth, German federal commissioner for human rights policy and humanitarian aid, said the best way was to pass laws upholding homosexuals' rights.

Roth represented West Germany and the European Union in the 22nd conference of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), a nine-day meet held in Manila and was concluded yesterday.

The 48-year-old former theater director noted that the Philippines was more open-minded than other Asian countries about the so-called "third sex," and more aware of the discrimination committed against that sector.

While lauding initiatives by some congressmen to pass a law on gay and lesbian rights, Roth warned that the proposed measure could be set back by "indecisiveness" which, she said, was the real problem.

It was the first time that the ILGA conference was held in Asia, where the stigma against gays and lesbians is still greater than in the West. Nevertheless, the commissioner noted, European countries like the Netherlands also took a long time to pass such landmark laws as the one allowing same-sex marriages.

Homosexuality is not a question of culture or location, Roth stressed, and human rights should be universally guaranteed. She hoped the Philippines would support a resolution filed by Brazil before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for the protection of gay rights—including those of bisexuals and transsexuals—all over the world.

The German official also praised President Macapagal-Arroyo's moratorium on the death penalty, but said the law itself should be repealed.

"It would be wonderful if the Philippines took the last step to legally abolish the death penalty," Roth said. "A democracy is considered strong if it shows no need for capital punishment."

She visited the Manila City Jail and thanked officials for being transparent, but expressed concerns about the overcrowding, and putting minors and adults in same cells.

Roth urged the Philippines to fulfill its commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, saying violations of children's rights were "crimes against the country's future."

She admitted feeling guilty that Germans and other Europeans are often the perpetrators of child abuse here, and pledged her country's continued support to the Philippines' efforts curbing the situation.

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Loren ready to fight Noli

From page A1

mean I will agree to be (her vice president) at the meeting," he said. "I will just listen."

But De Castro admitted that the meeting's agenda would be politics, and nothing else. "That's what I think will be discussed. It certainly looks that way after receiving five text messages ... from only one person."

'Winning team'

Malacañang and congressional officials are pushing for a team up between President Macapagal-Arroyo and De Castro, which a top congressional leader described as the "winning team."

Legarda said she would leave her political fate to the people who she hoped would vote for candidates based on "accomplishments and integrity."

Her consultations in various parts of the country show that people are "enthusiastic" about her plan to run for vice president, according to the senator.

Legarda, a guest at a symposium on environmental concerns at the Central Luzon State University, said she would announce before Christmas her political plans and the political party under which she would run.

No formal offer

De Castro said he could not agree to anything yet in the absence of a formal offer from the President. "I will study it first. That's my usual answer."

The broadcast journalist said the emissaries were "close to the President," but not Gabriel Claudio, Joey Rufino, Mike Defensor or First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Asked what would prompt him to finally seek higher office, he said: "Nothing yet. There's no sign. In the first place, I'm still unsure whether I will run or not. As I said, it's 50-50 (percent). And for what position, that's another 50 (percent)."

Lopez family

The top guns of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and its owner,



GMA CARAVAN

President Macapagal waves to the crowd during the drive-through on a new bridge connecting several towns in North Cotabato. With the President on the back of a truck are NIA administrator Jesus Paras, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo, North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol, US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone and Vice Gov. Sinsuat. PCPO-MALACANANG

the Lopez family, have yet to meet with him and give their support to any political arrangement in 2004, according to De Castro.

He did not comment on allegations that the Lopez family was strongly pushing for a GMA-Kabayan tandem in exchange for concessions from Malacañang. (See related story on Page A1).

Let public decide

Legarda sees nothing wrong if her former employer, ABS-CBN, supports the administration ticket.

"No problem for me if that will be the case. Anyway, it's the public which will decide the elections, not the broadcasting network," she said.

Mixed reactions from Mindanao administration lawmakers greeted Malacañang's move to enlist De Castro as the running mate of Ms Macapagal. Mindanao is the turf of Sen. Robert Barbers, a stalwart of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats who is aspiring to be the running mate of the President.

Experience and popularity

Rep. Prospero Pichay (Lakas, Surigao del Sur) welcomed a GMA-Kabayan tandem, saying this is the "perfect antidote to the supposed blockbuster ticket of FPJ and Loren." Pichay was referring to movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. and Legarda.

"GMA-Noli is the ideal combi-

nation of experience and popularity," Pichay said. "The FPJ-Loren is just all popularity."

Cautious

A member of the campaign team of Ms Macapagal, Pichay said that with De Castro's strong showing in surveys, the administration ticket could "capture the imagination of the entire nation."

"Do we want to gamble our future on a ticket that can count only on popularity?" Pichay said. "The consensus of Lakas leaders is that we have a winning team in GMA and De Castro."

But Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) noted with "caution and reservation" the re-

ported effort to enlist De Castro, who is not even a member of Lakas.

Nograles, the Lakas party whip for Mindanao, said that Mindanaoan lawmakers wanted a candidate from the South, particularly Barbers. "I can't see any value added in Noli," Nograles said. "There is no geography in a Gloria-Noli tandem."

Not transferable

Besides, "Noli's votes are not transferable to Gloria," Nograles said. "He can draw crowd for rallies but lacks experience in legislative and executive work," the congressman said. "Let's get from our own party and allies."

Representatives Juan Miguel

Zubiri (Lakas, Bukidnon) and J. Mayo Almario (Lakas, Davao Oriental) said they preferred a Mindanaoan like Barbers for "geographical balance."

Desperation

Desperation is driving Ms Macapagal in getting De Castro as her running mate, according to Sanlakas Rep. JV Bautista.

"She has to borrow the popularity of a television celebrity to try to clinch her election. She needs Noli de Castro to deodorize her opportunistic politics," Bautista said. *With reports from Carlito Pablo, Christine Avenaño in Manila and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Bureau*

Palace woos Lopezes for the 'dream team'

From page A1

ignated her college classmate, Secretary Marita "Mai-Mai" Jimenez to negotiate with Lopez to smoothen relations between Malacañang and the influential Lopez family, also the owner of the Manila Electric Co. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.

This was disclosed yesterday by a source in Ms Macapagal's camp a day after a top congressional leader revealed that the Palace was pushing for a team up between Ms Macapagal and De Castro.

The source, who asked not to be named, said other members of the Lopez family were endorsing De Castro's possible team up with Ms Macapagal. Gabby Lopez is the "last holdout," according to the source.

Constant companion

"This (negotiation) is top of the top," the source said. Jimenez holds the rank equivalent to a Cabinet secretary and is in charge of "priority programs" and foreign-assisted projects. A constant companion of the President

in foreign and domestic travels, Jimenez has her ear, the source added.

Some say that the latest toll increase in the North Luzon Expressway (which is being operated by the Lopezes' Benpress Holdings) and the restraining order issued in favor of Maynilad Water Services were part of the quid pro quo with the Lopezes. The court order placed Maynilad under receivership, preventing creditors from seizing its assets.



GABBY LOPEZ: The 'last holdout, among the 'top of the top.'



MAI-MAI JIMENEZ: GMA classmate is designated negotiator.

The source said "Gabby has yet to be mollified over what happened in the recent past," the source said. "Once Malacañang gets his nod, it's a go for a GMA-Kabayan ticket."

Infuriated

He recalled that the Lopezes were infuriated by purported attempts by Malacañang to take over Meralco in late 2002.

Finance Secretary Jose Camacho, a classmate of Gabby Lopez, prepared and submitted a memorandum of understanding to Lopez on Nov. 12, 2002 that purportedly provided for a takeover of Meralco. The proposal was made three days before the Nov. 15, 2002

ruling of the Supreme Court that ordered Meralco to reimburse its 3.8 million consumers a total of P28 billion in overcharges.

Camacho had explained that the memorandum of understanding was meant to put up a caretaker group for Meralco in the light of its expected financial troubles because of the refund.

The government is the biggest shareholder of Meralco, owning 25 percent of its stocks, but management control is exercised by the Lopezes.

Meralco is chaired by Gabby Lopez's uncle Manuel "Manolo" Lopez, brother of his father, the late Lopez patriarch Eugenio Lopez Jr.

Dec. 24, 26, Jan. 2 are non-working days

From page A1

thority of the President, declared Dec. 24 and Jan. 2 as special non-working days throughout the country in lieu of Dec. 30, Rizal Day, which shall be a regular working day. This order also applies to those working in the private sector.

The proclamation said Dec. 26, which falls on Friday, would be a special non-working day for government employees only.

This means that government employees will have 10 free days to celebrate the holidays. Their vacation

starts on Dec. 24, a Wednesday, and will end on Jan. 4, Sunday. However, they have to report for work on Dec. 29 and 30 which fall on Monday and Tuesday.

Domestic tourism

Malacañang said the long Christmas holiday was meant to "spur domestic tourism throughout the country."

The proclamation said that private sector employers, except those providing banking, financial, health security and other vital services to the public, have the option not to require

their employees to report for work on Dec. 26 and 27 (a Saturday) and on Jan. 3 (also a Saturday) next year provided they make arrangements to compensate for the off-days.

It said the employers could increase the daily work hours or allow work on other days before or after the Christmas holidays "to ensure that daily paid workers are paid the equivalent of the wages or compensation that they would have earned on the said dates and that production schedules are met to maintain a continuous supply of goods and services."

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With rice glut, GMA orders palay subsidy

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the National Food Authority to help the country's rice farmers by buying their palay harvest at a subsidized rate of P9 per kilo.

In an interview with DZRH radio, the President said that in view of reports that palay prices have fallen sharply due to a robust harvest season, "the NFA has to intervene in the market."

"Instead of using the money to import rice, the NFA should be buying the palay harvest of our farmers and let the traders take care of the importations," the President said.

She said this was a reversal of role for the NFA which used to import rice while the traders bought local palay. "This set-up should now be changed with the traders handling the importations and paying the duty of 50 percent," the President said.

Agriculture Secretary Luis P. Lorenzo said the palay subsidy could cost the government "several billions of pesos" due to the surprisingly high yield of palay in the third quarter this year which pulled down its price to as low as P6 per kilo in some areas.

Lorenzo stressed that the palay oversupply was seasonal and that the NFA's intervention was meant to smooth out the market for the country's farmers. Only registered farmers can avail themselves of the government subsidy for their palay which should meet the state's standards such as the maximum 14 percent moisture content.

The Department of Agriculture reported that the agriculture sector surged nearly 3 percent in the first 9 months this year partly due to strong palay and corn harvests.

Palay and corn rose 1.59 percent and .85 percent in the first 9 months this year, a turnaround from last year when both commodities slipped by over 3 percent during the same period. Rice harvest surged by 22 percent in the third quarter this year despite the bad weather.

Explain RSBS to soldiers, GMA tells AFP chief

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya to explain to officers and soldiers her government's efforts to bail out the financially-troubled Armed Forces of the Philippines-Retirement and Separation Benefits System which has long been a source of grumblings among the troops.

In a statement, Ms. Macapagal said: "The AFP Chief of Staff should explain the situation to all soldiers so they will not be manipulated into believing those who are trying to sow dissension in the ranks."

In a Senate hearing Tuesday, military officials admitted that the AFP-RSBS had racked up P23 billion in unpaid obligations to retirees due to its huge portfolio of real estate investments that have gone sour.

"We are bent on getting RSBS back on track as one of the priorities of reform within the AFP, but this will take time to be accomplished," the President said. "The RSBS has been bleeding since a long time ago and we inherited this problem from past administrations."

She noted that her administration had installed a professional board "to get the books right and we have ordered the big assets of RSBS sold so that we can augment the retirement pay of our soldiers which is being drawn from budget appropriations."

The government is currently eyeing several options to resuscitate AFP-RSBS including the infusion of new capital into the fund and merger with the GSIS. **Gil Cabacungan Jr.**

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Thursday, November 20, 2003
33rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Mac 2:15-29
Gospel: Lk 19:41-44

When Jesus had come in sight of the city, he wept over it and said, "If only today you knew the ways of peace! But now your eyes are held from seeing. Yet days will come upon you when your enemies will surround you with barricades and shut you in and press on you from every side. And they will dash you to the ground and your children with you, and leave not a stone within you, for you did not recognize the time and the visitation of your God."

Commentary

"For you did not recognize the time and the visitation of your God." Primitive religions lay greater emphasis on the efforts of man to find God: African religions would sacrifice animal blood, the Hindus would engage in the rituals of purification, the Buddhists would give pre-eminence on meditations and fasting. In Christianity, the greater stress is placed on the grace of God, it is God who takes the initiative and who visits man. Jesus, the Son of God, was sent by the Father in order to find the lost, the last and the least of the sheep. But man has to respond to the initiative of God. Man has to acknowledge the visitation of God. Man has to cooperate in order to be saved. Someone said that when we were created, God did not consult us but in order to be saved, we must give our consent and cooperation.

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3 suspects in kidnap-slay of Coke exec held

From page A1
victim to his group's Cavite safe house.

Sy, 32, commercial finance director of Coca-Cola Export Corp., was seized Monday on her way to her office by gunmen who opened fire on her car after she apparently refused to open it, hitting her leg and arm, according to Reyes.

Her body was found early Tuesday on a seaside road in Parañaque. She apparently bled to death from her leg wounds, police said.

Relentless

President Macapagal-Arroyo assured the Filipino-Chinese community, often the target of kidnap-for-ransom cases, that her government "will be relentless in hunting down" the kidnap gangs "until they no longer pose a serious threat to public safety."

In a statement, the President expressed "deepest sympathy" to Sy's family. Ms Macapagal said she had directed Reyes "to get cracking and I want to see firm results before the year is over."

The President appointed Reyes last month to coordinate all law enforcement agencies involved in fighting the abduction problem that has led to the Philippines being dubbed as Asia's kidnap capital.

Sy's kidnapping and murder is the worst of the more than 100



POLICE investigators inspect the body of Bettie Chua Sy after it was found wrapped in a blanket and garbage bag near the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in Parañaque City Tuesday.

REUTERS

abduction cases this year, said Teresita Ang-See, leader of the watchdog group Citizens' Action Against Crime.

Ang-See said the kidnappers had demanded a P10-million ransom from Sy's family, but termi-

nated negotiations just hours after they seized her, suggesting she may have already died by then. She said the kidnappings were driving away potential investors because the law and order situation in the country had become

"so inhospitable."

Estilles and his men presented the suspects to Reyes in his office at the headquarters of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) at Camp Crame late yesterday afternoon. Reyes also

heads Pacer.

"We hope the arrest of the suspects and the immediate resolution of the case would somehow silence his critics," Estilles said.

Before the suspects were presented to him, Reyes told reporters that the motive behind Sy's abduction and murder involved nothing beyond money.

After his surrender, driver Roger led police to the house at No. 4 Molave Ave., Merville Park Subdivision, in Parañaque where they recovered the Toyota Tamaraw FX van (UFR-225) at around 6:30 a.m. The suspects dragged a bleeding Sy into the van right after they blocked the victim's Toyota RAV4 in Quezon City.

Plastic bag

Hours later, police proceeded to the Cavite safe house where they found Palla and Dimol. Authorities, however, found no one when they barged into the nearby house at Lot 4, which was supposedly being rented by Babes.

Estilles said it was in the second house where Edith, Babes, and the rest of the gang wrapped Sy's body in a blanket then stuffed it in a black plastic garbage bag.

Quoting neighbors, the police official said Babes left the house early Tuesday morning on the pretext that she would be attending an excursion.

The Waray group is composed of recruits from Iloilo and Samar who have been operating mainly in Metro Manila for at least five years now, according to a Pacer official.

Some of its members, he said, included dismissed officers from the military and the police.

Reyes said there were indeed "bad eggs" from the Armed Forces, Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation who might be involved in criminal activities such as kidnapping.

"But it doesn't mean that these institutions are rotten," he told reporters.

The NBI has offered its help to police investigating the abduction and killing of Sy. NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said that while Pacer would be handling Sy's murder, the bureau would help in the forensic tests, in the production of the suspects' sketches, in intelligence gathering and in the investigation itself.

In Angeles City, the Filipino-Chinese community mourned the murder of Sy. "We grieve for her. And many of us are asking why she had to be killed," Freddie So, president of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce in the city, said.

The community, So said, had been more vigilant since Sy's murder. With reports from Leila B. Salaverria in Manila and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk



SUSPECTS now detained in Camp Crame allegedly demanded a P10-million ransom.

JOAN BONDOC



RECOVERED in Merville, the Toyota Tamaraw FX is where a bleeding Bettie was dragged by her kidnappers.

JOAN BONDOC

Reyes dared to prove his competence

From page A1

official who has been in the anti-kidnapping operations of the Philippine National Police.

"We understand the urgency of the situation, but the least that our boss could do is to stay calm and concentrate on the job at hand," he said.

"He's always in a rush and that's not how we are supposed to operate against kidnap-for-ransom groups," the official told the INQUIRER.

Such an attitude, the official added, was very evident with Reyes' handling of the abduction and killing of Coca-Cola executive Bettie Chua Sy.

Still, many police officers now working under him at the newly created NAKTF are convinced that he's the best man for the job. But others remain skeptical that his vast military background will yield significant results.

GMA support

President Macapagal-Arroyo defended her appointment of

Reyes as task force head, saying: "He is the man for the job because he already knows the capability of the Armed Forces. He has already included them in the team also composed of policemen."

Give him chance

The President, who has claimed success in cracking down on a number of kidnap-for-ransom gangs under her term, reactivated the NAKTF last month with Reyes, who also heads the government's anti-terrorist campaign, as its head.

"Let us give him a chance because [kidnapping cases] have dropped since he took over," she said in an interview with radio dzRH yesterday.

The President and her spokesperson could not come up with data to back up this claim.

Her remark that the Sy kidnapping was the first case under Reyes' watch seemed pointless.

No-ransom policy

The police official also noted

Reyes' inability to effectively "articulate" the government's no-ransom policy.

During interviews, Reyes often stated that the government will never pay a single centavo to kidnap syndicates in order to deter other criminal groups from straying into this "lucrative" operation, but he failed to elaborate on the policy, the source said.

Reyes, he explained, should have consistently emphasized that while the families of some victims might be willing to pay ransom, authorities would often be involved in the negotiations if only to establish contact with the perpetrators.

"Once contact is established," he said, "it would be easier for us to track down these syndicates, arrest them, and hopefully recover the ransom money."

Learning the ropes

Despite Reyes' "shortcomings," the official said all these would soon pass once the former defense chief "learned the ropes" in

anti-kidnapping operations and "adjusted his style to that of his subordinates."

"We know he's a very capable leader and under his watch, we can only hope that the NAKTF could finally eliminate the kidnapping menace in the country," he said.

Drilon challenged Reyes to "go beyond mere statements before the media." He said: "The entire nation is watching him. We will watch him perform."

CAAC warning

Ms Macapagal's claim of gains in her administration's anti-kidnapping efforts contrasted sharply with the report of Teresita Ang-See, spokesperson of the private watchdog Citizens' Action Against Crime.

In an interview yesterday at the Manila City Hall, Ang-See disclosed that over 100 persons have been kidnapped as of October (roughly one kidnap victim every three days), and the

figure was substantially higher than that of last year.

Earlier, Ang-See reported that one kidnapping incident took place in the country every day, with more than 100 cases by the end of October. Authorities, on the other hand, counted 83 cases.

Shattered lives

"We are not just talking of numbers, but shattered lives. The time for talks and appeals to the government is over," she said.

She warned of "vast consequences" if the kidnapping problem remains unresolved. Businessmen, she said, complained of being unable to focus on their work because of the trauma of having to "constantly watch their backs" every time they left their homes.

Dared Reyes

"We are becoming counterproductive. And the young people who could potentially contribute to the country would pack their bags and leave because of the fear

for their lives," she said.

Ang-See dared Reyes to "produce and punish the people who did this, and there might be a semblance of hope." She lamented: "How many more deaths before we find them (kidnappers)?"

Lacson

Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said Reyes was not fit to be the anti-kidnap czar, a position that the opposition leader once held during the Estrada administration.

Interviewed over a program hosted by Ernesto Maceda over dwIZ, Lacson said Reyes' forte was more in "community relations" than police work.

He also said that in the first place, Reyes was appointed to that position by Malacañang so as to "mollify" him after being "unceremoniously" kicked out as secretary of national defense. With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan, Christine O. Avendaño and Tara Quismundo

Pinoys sing 'My Way' amid Iraq gunfire

From page A1

magic mike," Brig. Gen. Pedro Ramboanga, commander of the Philippine Humanitarian Contingent to Iraq, said at a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo.

According to Ramboanga, peacekeepers from other nations have also been testing their voices on the multi-functional microphone that offers a selection of up to 2,000 English songs and gives out a score on one's singing.

"All the coalition forces who are fond of singing—the Spanish, the Latin Americans and the Americans—go to our tents to borrow our mike," Ramboanga said at a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo.

Apart from singing, the Filipino peacekeepers also spend their free time watching movies on DVD, jogging, brisk walking or playing table tennis at the sports facilities of their quarters, according to Ramboanga.

The Filipino peacekeepers, composed of 55 soldiers, 26 policemen and 15 health workers, share quarters in a two-story building in Al Hila, capital of Babil, in south-central Iraq.

Filipino policemen are training Iraq border guards, while the soldiers and health workers are conducting "needs analysis surveys" and forwarding these to the headquarters of the US-led coalition in Baghdad.

Ramboanga, however, said a

recent wave of attacks by insurgents on occupation forces had prompted the Filipino contingent to be more vigilant.

Morale high

"Every time we go out, we'll have our Kevlar helmet, our body armor. We're not sure about our safety, but the Filipinos are doing all right," Ramboanga said.

"Morale is high ... But you can't guarantee 100-percent security because terrorists strike anytime," he added.

So far, no Filipino peacekeeper has been hurt in any attack.

"There's nothing to be alarmed about," he said. "Our troops are relatively safe."

Ramboanga said Filipino peacekeepers had not encountered any resistance and had been welcomed by the local population.

"Judging by the acceptance of the Iraqi grassroots, we believe the Philippine mission is succeeding," he said.

If security worsens

Even so, other coalition forces may soon miss the singing voices of Filipino peacekeepers in the desert.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said Tuesday that the Philippines would consider withdrawing its troops from Iraq if the security situation there worsens.

But Foreign Secretary Blas

Ople said there were no plans to pull the contingent out now, despite a rise in terror attacks on coalition forces.

Ms Macapagal said security conditions in Iraq are being continually assessed. "We will ensure that our nationals will be kept out of harm's way and will be immediately evacuated if called for by the shifting situation," she said.

Emerging from a meeting late Tuesday with Philippine special envoy to Iraq Roy Cimatu and Ramboanga, Ople said: "We are in Iraq to help the Iraqi people in compliance with the United Nations Security Council. We'll stay on."

He dismissed as "complete

nonsense" reports in the local media that the Philippines would withdraw following a string of deadly bombings.

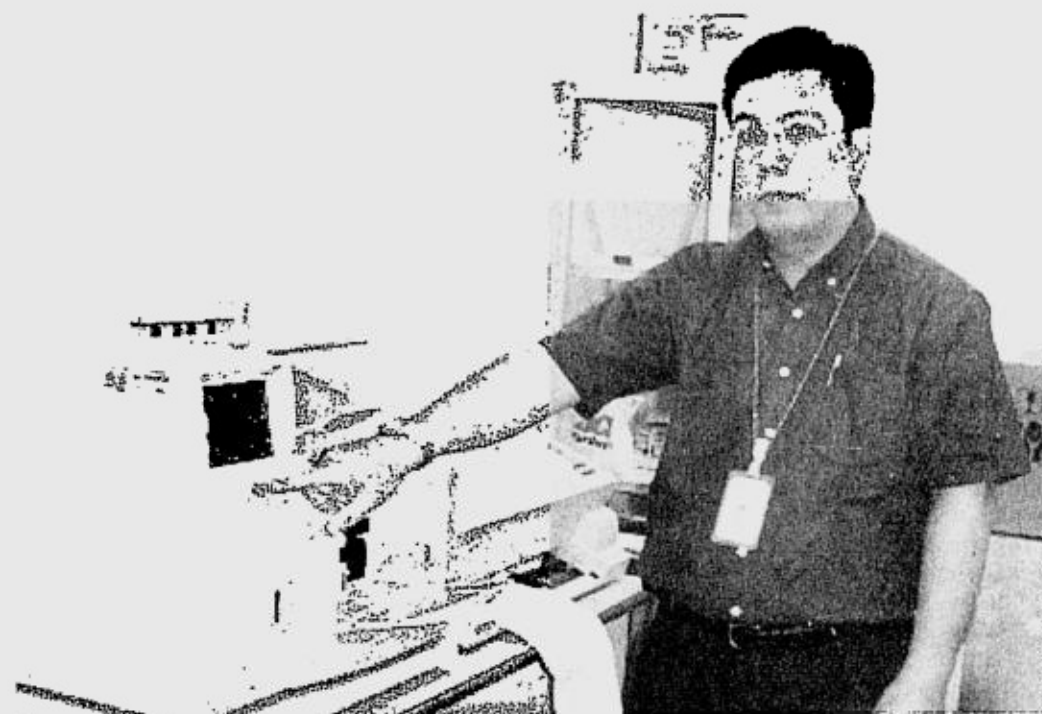
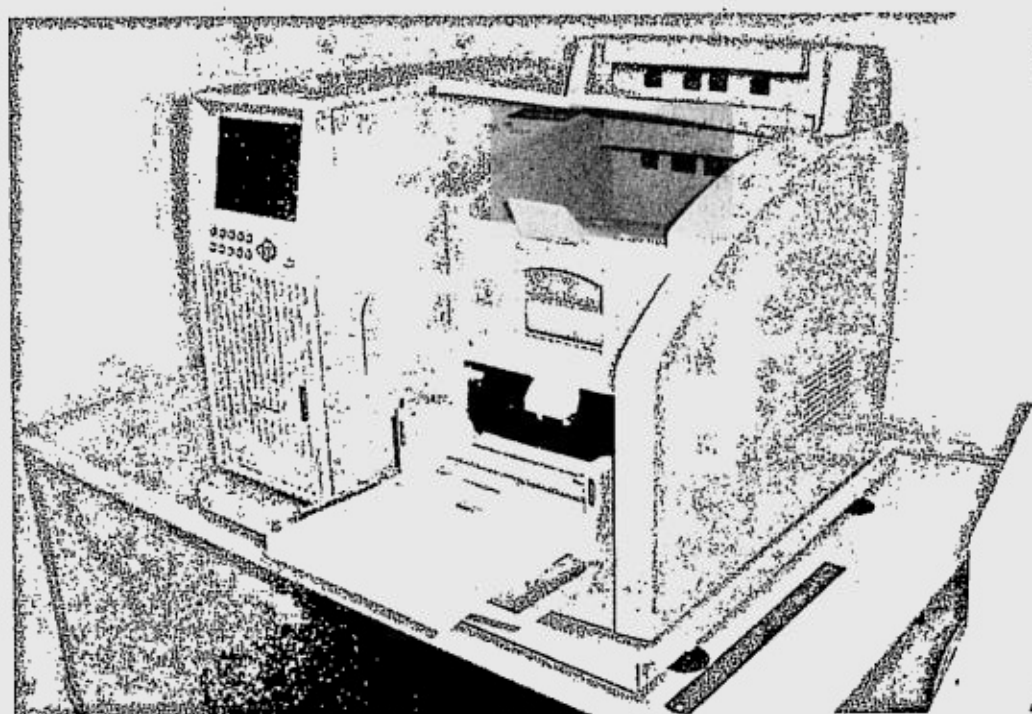
Ople said the Philippine government intended to proceed with its planned full deployment of 178 peacekeepers.

"And on top of that, we plan to send more resources allowing, to a total of 500 personnel," he said, even as he admitted that safety remained a primary concern.

Cimatu and Ramboanga said Filipinos were assigned in a relatively safe, central-south area of operation, outside the more dangerous "Sunni triangle." With reports from Jerome Aning and AP

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The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), through Technical Evaluation Committee chairman Rolando Vitoria, has certified in his October 24, 2003 letter to Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Commissioner Resurrecion Borra that the Mega Pacific stand-alone automatic counting machines (ACM) have a 100 percent accuracy rating under all environmental conditions provided that the ballots are shaded correctly.

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SK&CC is part of the Mega Pacific consortium that won the bidding for the supply of stand-alone automatic counting machines (ACM) to be used in the Philippines' May 2004 national elections.

The other consortium partners are WeSolv Open Computing Inc., Election.com Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Accenture) and ePLDT.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Pageantry, protests greet Bush in London

LONDON—Amid royal pageantry and antiwar protests, US President George W. Bush is defending the invasion of Iraq as a necessary use of military power while likening reconstruction efforts to rebuilding a shattered Europe after two world wars.

Queen Elizabeth II was greeting Bush on Wednesday at Buckingham Palace to open a state visit, giving an official welcome to the American leader.

Buckingham Palace, the queen's London residence, also was a focal

point for demonstrators bitterly opposed to the Iraq war. They shouted "Murderer!" and "You are not welcome!" as Bush's helicopter ferried him to the palace Tuesday night.

In a speech at Whitehall Palace, Bush was seeking to puncture

what he views as misconceptions on this side of the Atlantic about America's use of force. He was subtly invoking Europe's history of appeasement of dictators, and the price Europeans paid for their governments' inaction, aides said.

Bush was explicitly reminding Europeans about the critical work the Allies did to set postwar Germany on the path to democracy, a process the Bush administration and the British

are trying to accelerate today in Iraq.

As many as 100,000 people were preparing to march through London to protest the Iraq war and occupation, a fresh sign of the opposition that swept through much of Europe in the run-up to the invasion and has deepened for many Europeans since.

Bush's visit to Britain dominated broadsheet newspapers in the country on Wednesday morning. Head-

lines concentrated on the unprecedented level of security surrounding the visit, with The Times of London's front page leading with "President strolls into Fortress Britain." Inside, many newspapers carried pictures of policemen carrying submachine guns, a rare sight in Britain.

On the first full day of a 3 1/2-day trip to England, Bush was trying to reframe Europeans' perceptions of American military might. He wants

to sway Britons like Ann Butler, 63, who compared Bush to the gun-slinging lawmen of the Old West.

"This country's lost enough men in war," Butler said outside Buckingham Palace, where she was one of about 100 protesters who berated Bush as his helicopter touched down Tuesday night. "You Americans had Sept. 11. Maybe you had to get Saddam, but it's got nothing to do with us British." AP

JI chief has direct links to al-Qaida

JAKARTA—The purported new military chief of a Southeast Asian terror group is among a handful of Indonesians in direct contact with al-Qaida and is now considered the most lethal terrorist in Asia, plotting fresh attacks in the region, officials said.

Known as Zulkarnaen, the highest-ranking Jemaah Islamiyah leader still on the loose is believed to head an elite squad that helped carry out a suicide bombing at a Jakarta hotel that killed 12 people, in addition to helping prepare bombs that killed 202 people in Bali, US and Indonesian officials said.

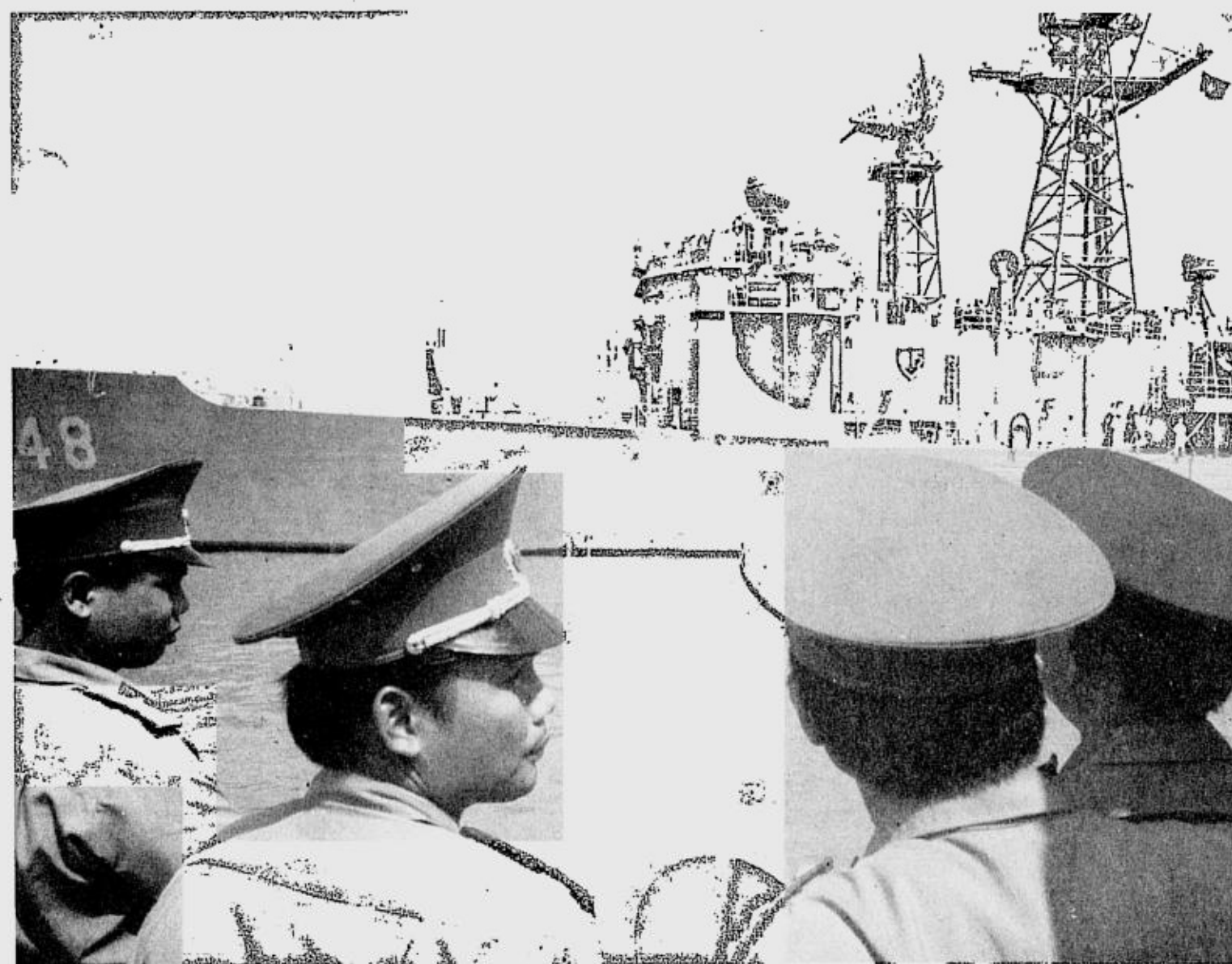
Zulkarnaen held a meeting in March on the tiny island of Sebatik with two other senior militants to plot upcoming attacks against Western hotels and banks in Indonesia, a senior intelligence adviser said. The adviser as well as the US and Indonesia officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

"He's considered to be the most dangerous guy that's out there," said terrorism expert Ken Conboy, who runs Risk Management Advisory, a Jakarta-based security consultancy, and has written several books on Indonesia.

"Not only did he excel on the demolition side but he also has a proven ability on the leadership side. I guess he's got a spark of charisma," Conboy added.

Zulkarnaen, whose real name is Aris Sumarsono, is called Daud by fellow militants and is thought to be hiding in Indonesia. He became operations chief for Jemaah Islamiyah several weeks after the August arrest in Thailand of his alleged predecessor, Riduan Isamuddin, also known as Hambali, US and Indonesian officials said.

He's now among al-Qaida's point-men in Southeast Asia and is one of the few people in Indonesia who have direct contact with Osama bin Laden's terror network, said the intelligence adviser. The International Crisis Group think tank recently issued a report also listing Zulkarnaen as having direct contact with al-Qaida's leadership. No details were available on the contacts. AP



THE USS Vandegrift on Wednesday docks at Ho Chi Minh City, the first American warship to visit Vietnam since the end of the bloody conflict nearly 30 years ago. REUTERS

US warship makes historic visit to Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY—The first US Navy warship to cruise up the Saigon River since the Vietnam War ended nearly 30 years ago sailed into dock Wednesday in what is now Ho Chi Minh City, signaling a new era of relations between the former foes.

The USS Vandegrift's historic visit comes as the two countries have been working to boost bilateral ties, and marks a new attempt at establishing military cooperation.

"I think one of the messages here today is that the... US and Vietnam are showing the world that former foes can become friends," said US Ambassador

Raymond Burghardt.

Burghardt said the US and Vietnamese military had been moving closer together on areas including counterterrorism. However, he said the United States was not looking to reestablish a permanent military presence in Vietnam but merely wanted access to friendly nations' ports instead.

Escorted by a Vietnamese patrol boat, the frigate made its way into Saigon Port with US and Vietnamese flags flying. A chain of white-uniformed sailors stood along the ship's railings as it came in, some holding video cameras and binoculars.

The American group, led by ship Cmdr. Richard Rogers, disembarked down a red-carpeted walkway to be greeted by a Vietnamese delegation headed by Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Nguyen Duc Hung.

"My first impression is that the river transit today was fantastic," Rogers said. "I think my crew genuinely enjoyed coming up the river and seeing the sights as we came up. My crew is very excited to be here."

The four-day port call follows a landmark meeting last week by Vietnamese Defense Minister Pham Van Tra and US Secretary of De-

fense Donald H. Rumsfeld—the first time a senior Vietnamese military official has visited Washington.

Bilateral ties have been steadily expanding since diplomatic relations were established in 1995. Trade has risen to more than \$3 billion annually with the passage of a landmark agreement in 2001, and Vietnam recently said the United States now ranked as its top importer.

However, the two countries have been less enthusiastic in military-to-military talks. The only issue in that area to see progress was the joint search for Americans listed as missing in action during the war. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

US jets pound Iraqi rebel lairs

BAGHDAD—US jets blasted suspected hideouts with 225-kg bombs in the military's biggest operation in central Iraq since the end of active combat. Later, troops rained mortar fire on Tikrit in a warning to insurgents accused of attacking US-led troops. In Mosul, two more US soldiers were wounded Tuesday by a roadside bomb, the US military said. Officials also said an American civilian contractor had been killed a day earlier by a land mine near Baghdad. AP

US launches media offensive

WASHINGTON—As American troops step up their attacks on Iraqi resistance, US occupation officials also are launching a media offensive under pressure from the White House to do a better job promoting the military campaign against insurgents. Part of the idea is to give the American public a better sense that US troops are on the offensive and not just passively facing daily, deadly attacks from Iraqi guerrillas. In effect, the idea is to return to the type of briefing operations that occurred during the war's major combat phase, defense officials said Tuesday. AP

Turkish suicide bombers blamed

ISTANBUL—Turkish authorities concluded Tuesday that two deadly synagogue bombings were carried out by Turkish militants inspired by—and perhaps working for—the al-Qaida terror network. The finding fuels growing suspicions that Osama bin Laden's reach extends to NATO's sole Muslim member. "It will be determined whether these people worked directly with al-Qaida or are just sympathizers," Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said by telephone from Stockholm, Sweden. "The first impression is that these people seemed to have the same mindset of al-Qaida; they have the same concept, they are from the same school." AP

China: Use of force may be unavoidable

BEIJING—In unusually strong language, China ratcheted up the rhetoric against Taiwan in remarks published Wednesday and threatened that "the use of force may become unavoidable" if the island's leaders pursue independence. The warning from Beijing came as Taiwan prepares to elect a new leader in March. President Chen Shui-bian, running for office again, has won over more voters since he came up with plans for a new constitution and a law on referendums that could conceivably lead to citizens voting on Taiwanese independence. Wang Zai, a top mainland official who deals with the Taiwan issue, said curbing any efforts the island makes toward independence was the ultimate goal of the mainland, which would go to war if necessary. AP

Police raid Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch

LOS ANGELES—Police and prosecutors on Tuesday swooped down on pop icon Michael Jackson's lavish Neverland Ranch amid fresh allegations that the superstar abused a 12-year-old boy, a Jackson lawyer said.

The highly publicized raid, that took place while Jackson was out of town, reignited suspicions that have been swirling around Jackson since he was accused of molesting a 13-year-old boy 10 years ago.

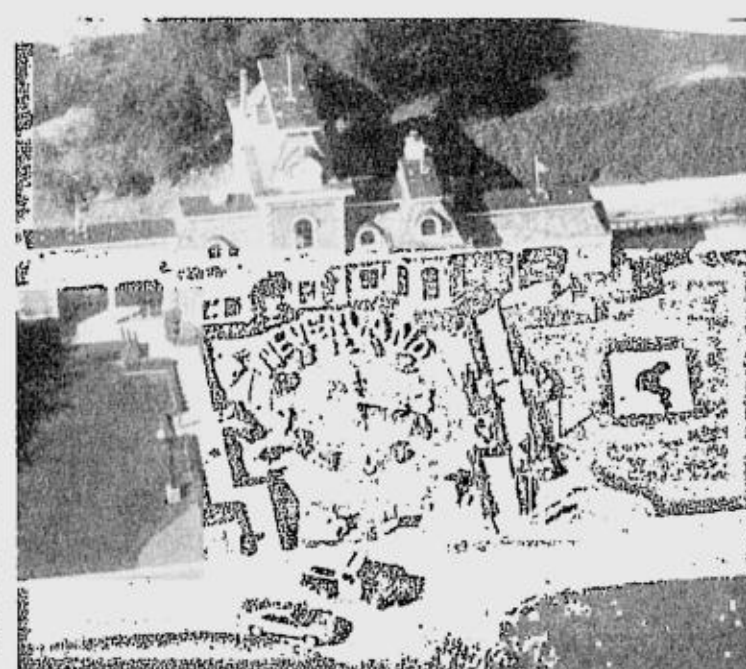
Between 60 and 70 investigators armed with a search warrant issued by a judge swarmed on the sprawling estate near Santa Barbara, California, at 8:30 a.m., Senior Sheriff's Deputy Tim Gracey said.

Police declined to reveal the reason for the dramatic search of the "Gloved One's" retreat that draws its name from the "Peter Pan" children's stories.

However, Jackson family lawyer Brian Oxman confirmed reports that the raid was sparked by new child abuse allegations against the 45-year-old father of three, and dismissed the accusation as "insane."

"The search warrant indicated that there is an accusation by a 12-year-old boy who says that he was molested and the police are seizing information that they feel is relevant to that accusation," he told reporters.

"We are certain that police will be looking for photographs and they are going to enjoy themselves by



POLICE search Michael Jackson's sprawling home on Nov. 18 amid another brewing sex scandal. AFP

looking at all the history of Michael Jackson, but we are very doubtful that they will find anything."

Police said the search would go on late into the night and that they would announce details of the search at 11 a.m. on Wednesday.

The raid coincided with Jackson's release of "Number One," his first album since "Invincible" flopped last year.

Police and press vehicles gath-

ered outside his classical-style mansion, which is surrounded by a children's zoo, a welter of theme park rides which "Jacko" opens to local children once a year.

Jackson's Los Angeles publicist said he had no idea what the reason was for the raid that took place as the singer reportedly was filming a video in Las Vegas.

"We cannot comment on law enforcement's investigation because

we do not yet know what it is about," said Stuart Backerman. "Michael will, as always, cooperate fully with authorities in any investigation even as it is conducted, yet again, while he is not home."

The publicist lashed out at media coverage branding those commenting on the case "a rogue's gallery of hucksters and self-styled 'insider sources'... speculating, guessing and fabricating."

"I've seen lawyers who do not represent me and spokespeople who do not know me speaking for me," he quoted Jackson as saying in a statement.

Prosecutors in Santa Barbara, the town about 160 km north of Los Angeles near where eternally-youthful Jackson lives, also declined to comment.

The raid came nine months after prosecutors investigated his "unusual" admission in a British television interview that he had slept in the same bed as a 12-year-old boy in his mansion.

Any claims of wrongdoing were quickly dismissed and Jackson denied any impropriety with the boy while Court TV said the latest probe was not connected to that incident.

The eccentric Peter Pan of music in 1993 was accused of sexually abusing a 13-year-old, a case that Jackson settled out-of-court in an undisclosed civil payment that was reportedly in excess of \$25 million. AP

HAS THE RULE OF LAW BECOME A PART OF THE FORGOTTEN LORE?

By
Atty. Antonio M. Meer
Chairman Emeritus, U.P. Law Alumni Association Inc.

A man has to stand up for his beliefs. Strangely enough, I was attracted to the controversy arising from the case involving the Joint Venture Agreement between the PEA and AMARI. I do not lawyer for any party litigant. I was a mere bystander, reading the news until it dawned upon me that the critical issues involved in the case were in *pari materia* to the case I handled so long ago for the City of Cebu in its reclamation project undertaken under Republic Act No. 1899 and Republic Act No. 3857. Out of curiosity, I perused the decision in the PEA- AMARI case and I was shocked to find out that the initial overpowering ponencia of the learned Justice Antonio Carpio, was bereft of any mention of our landmark case decided in 1965 and 1966. My hackles stood up.

I tried to find the reason for the omission and found out that the fault did not lie in the ponente's hands. The fact which greeted me was that our landmark case had not been published in the SCRA and it languished in the dusty archives of the Supreme Court. I could not rest. In my whole life I have always acted as a lawyer for a rule of law. I hastened to file a Manifestation advising the Court that our leading case could lead to the favorable resolution of the PEA JVA Contract with AMARI. I take pride in the fact that along with two Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, the late Chief Justice Ricardo Paras and ex-Chief Justice Enrique Fernando, we were able to successfully defend the legality of the reclamation in the City of Cebu.

I thank Chief Justice Davide for having recognized the merits of my unusual observation, by including it in the Court's agenda before resolving the case with finality.

Deadlock

I cannot deny the prerogative of the Court to reverse the ruling of the Court of Chief Justice Cesar P. Bengzon, or to say that it is not applicable to the case at hand. The power exists, but the rationale for the exercise should be clear and overpowering. I followed the case and I found out that the Court was deadlocked and the result was to deny the Motion for Reconsideration filed by one of the party litigants. It did not bother me the least bit that the procedural rules struck down the motion for reconsideration of a party litigant. What shocked me out of my wits was that the principal basis relied upon by one camp, as evidenced by the Resolution of the Court dated Nov. 11, 2003 was that the PEA - AMARI Contract should be voided because it was tainted by the grandmother of all scams, no less than a bribery in the colossal amount of 1.75 Billion which took place to consummate the contract, and I quote, "By any legal or moral yardstick, the P1,754 billion in commissions obviously constitute bribe money x x x Should this Court establish a new doctrine by elevating grease money to the status of legitimate investments deserving of protection under the law? Should this Court reward the patently illegal and unethical business practice of the private entity in securing the contract? Should we allow those with hands dripping with dirty money equitable relief from this Court" (p. 11, Resolution dated Nov. 11, 2003, G.R. No. 133250; underscoring ours)

It pains me no end to see that our abiding allegiance to the rule of law had vanished into thin air. I read, with disbelief, that the Supreme Court had relied on the findings of a Senate Committee and that the basis for such an indictment did not sit in any judicial archive.

No one had been convicted of bribery and neither had the bribe takers. If it be true that such a huge crime had been committed, I wondered if I had missed the fact that the Courts of Justice had convicted the public officials, going up to the highest echelons of our Executive Branch, together with the bribe giver, while I was looking elsewhere.

My eyesight must have deserted me. I did not find any trace of our Court's having established with finality any single case to show that such a grand crime had taken place. The people have the right to expect that the seriousness of the crime, which no less than the Supreme Court had utilized to void the contract, merits a public condemnation and the guilty parties have to be hanged, if our laws have any meaning at all, that is- if the law had been observed.

Justice must be dispensed in favor of the public and against the erring public officials and the errant briber. But it does not justify the Supreme Court availing of their presumed guilt to void a contract which had passed inspection by the meticulous eyes of two Presidents of the Philippines and all their legal eagles, before it was agreed upon. Nothing less will satisfy me, unless our Constitution is a scrap of paper, which we have all agreed to dump into a waste basket and to erase it from our memory.

Presumption

On the other side of the coin, before the persons accused are found to be guilty by our Courts, and certainly not by the Senate Committee, they are entitled to the presumption of innocence. I emphasize, the fatal error was committed by the seven justices who voted to strike down the Motion for Reconsideration, to void the JVA between the PEA and AMARI, by swallowing the line and adopting the logic that the findings of bribery by the Senate Committee suffices to render the contract null and void.

This is a complete abdication of the judicial power, vested only in the Supreme Court and such other lower courts as may be established by law. The Court cannot cede to the Senate Committee the power to determine the guilt ascribed to the parties concerned. Mark it, the final vote on this vital issue was seven to seven so that no clear majority of the Court had surrendered their judicial powers to some other entity. The seven dissenting justices, led by Senior Justice Josue Bellosillo stood their ground and maintained that the rule of law takes precedence over the mistaken assumption derived from a Senate Committee Report and thus the deadlock in the Court. Take your pick! Who is correct? What a choice. Justice can be blown by the wind either way. Who can foretell the future for the Philippines? We therefore flounder in a sea of despair. A technicality has resulted in the voiding of the contract on the assumption that the guilt of the erring parties had been determined in a forum, other than in the courts of law, where the persons accused are entitled to defend themselves before they are finally adjudged and sent to hell.

I cheered on the sidelines, when our Supreme Court did not blink one moment in defending its right to interpret the Constitution, when some members of the House of Representatives of Congress tried to railroad the impeachment of the Chief Justice, no less. In that case, the Supreme Court zealously protected its right to rule on such a constitutional issue. That was its shining moment. That took place not so long ago and yet seven of the same venerable men wearing their robes faltered and fell short of my expectations, when they chose to void a celebrated contract, by surrendering their jurisdiction to try the parties, who were accused of such a monstrous crime. I have not seen the ghost of a criminal information being filed against any and all the parties to such an enormous crime of bribery, and if I have erred because such had actually been done, I had not been a witness to any bribe giver and any bribe taker being finally convicted of such a grand crime. How in heaven's name, can we ignore the Bill of Rights which protects under its mantle - "THE RIGHT OF ANY MAN TO BE PRESUMED INNOCENT, UNTIL HIS GUILT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT?"

Loss of ideals

My fixation was centered on the fact that seven men in our Supreme Court, including the Chief Justice, had voted to strike down the Joint Venture Agreement between the PEA and AMARI using as their principal basis the Report of a Senate Committee, which was submitted in aid of legislation, and not to prove the guilt of the parties with finality.

I shuddered when I realized the full impact of the belief of the seven men of our venerable Supreme Court, who had been mesmerized, beguiled and enticed by the Senate Committee to surrender their right to try the alleged criminals before the Courts, before they precipitately voted to strike down a contract on the basis of the mere say-so of a Senate Committee.

I know that the ponente, as well as the six other concurring justices have relied on other reasons to justify their view to create the deadlock in the Court. I have no doubt as to their integrity. Nonetheless, I am lost in my misery. I do not grieve for the losing party litigant. I grieve for the loss of our ideals and beliefs. I hear the tolling of the bells to announce the death of the rule of law. They may not realize it, but the naked truth is staring them in the face. Let them sit back and ponder on the gravity of the offense they had unwittingly committed against all the basic principles which we hold dear. LET THEIR CONSCIENCE BE THEIR GUIDE. I HOPE THEY CAN SWALLOW THE BITTER PILL.

It appalled me that the judgment derives its strength from a mere Senate Committee Report. It is my view that the fine points of law embodied in the decision in the Cebu Reclamation case should suffice to sway the Court to rule that the reclamation in the present instance by the PEA under its JVA with AMARI can be upheld, but since I do not lawyer for any party litigant, I will refrain from expressing my reasons on the said issues. I will leave that to the proper parties to invoke, and for the Court to decide.

Conclusion

The seven other justices, who dissented, indicated that the ultimate result of the deadlock would be to deter any other person or entity to reclaim foreshore and submerged lands. Of course, who would be insane enough to risk his money to reclaim such lands with no clear view that it would be safe from another deadlock in the Supreme Court? This becomes more painful when we realize that the government on its own does not have any money in its coffers for such a gigantic project. Thus, we have to content ourselves with the sight of the murky and polluted waters of Manila Bay and irretrievably lose the chance to convert useless submerged lands into usable reclaimed land. The fetish to protect to the death the inalienable character of all lands of the public domain has done in the project under review. With the impasse in the Court on such a crucial issue, who would be foolish enough to expose themselves to the financial risk in future planned reclamations? If and when a new reclamation project becomes the subject of a judicial inquiry, Justice Adolfo Asuncion would be in the hot seat, unless the Justice replacing Justice Bellosillo decides to break the tie. Any plan to improve the urban sector would be foreclosed. The stakes are high and we can suffer, perish or live to see the grandeur of a highly urbanized and modern Philippines.

I therefore look with envy at some of the more progressive and enlightened countries in our region, such as Singapore, Hongkong and Taiwan, who have not denied to their people the clear right to improve the quality of their lives and progress with the march of time. Their people will enjoy prosperity, while our own people sit on the sidelines to watch the passing crowd and attend the burial of the rule of law and the vaunted separation of powers, which each of the three branches of government had guarded so zealously, until this case arose.



Pilipinas k

A clarion call to from his

The Philippines today is a lost nation—in tears, in rags and in chains. Over 82 million Filipinos are stuck in the past, stragglers in the present, blocked from forging the future. The elitist leadership exercises a stark and ruthless form of apartheid where the citizenry can in principle complain. But the people cannot as of now liberate themselves from the grinding poverty and political vassalage that has long transformed the nation's democracy into a big joke. What price this democracy? Just the upper ten percent of the population own about 75 percent of the nation's wealth and live in luxury. The huge majority of eighty percent possess only a trifling 9 percent and live in penury.

While the bulk of Asia bids fair to become the world's economic powerhouse in the 21st century, surpassing America and Europe, we are the continent's celebrated classroom dunce. Once upon a time, we were briefly the progressive Pearl of the Orient Seas. We had a tentative hand on the future in the early 60s. But it was a hand that slipped because the national leadership betrayed the hope and trust of the nation. And had no vision. And we went crashing down, hardly ever to rise proudly again as a nation.

The Philippines missed out on the postwar "Asian economic miracle" that startled the world in the last quarter of the 20th century. That added to our tragedy. It was a terrible, unforgivable failure again of our leadership to seize the moment and get ourselves out of the muck. Our leaders have been fibbing for years. They continue to boast "our fundamentals are sound." They say the economy is "going up roses".

The truth? We have now in hand Asia's largest begging bowl. We are poorer, more miserable than ever.

And yet on June 3, 1898, President Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo of the Philippine Revolutionary Government forecast the Filipino people were destined "for greatness and to be one of the instruments of Providence to govern the destinies of mankind". Jose Rizal had the same undying faith as he fell at the Luneta. His "Mi Ultimo Adios" was a belltower ringing with resounding hope. Ninoy Aquino just 20 years ago declared the "Filipino is worth dying for" as he sprawled dead on the airport tarmac, his arms outstretched like an imploring cross.

Why did the Filipino dream collapse? The answers are many and varied.

First, the leadership since Spanish times in subservience to foreign interests, failed us. And failed us miserably. The masses of our people were largely ignored. They were not given a stake charting the future of the country. Our brand of democracy was what Manuel Quezon called it: "A Philippines run like hell by Filipinos!" At that, the wrong Filipinos—the grasping elite, and ilustrados.

Second, our population streaked from just 16 million after World War II to an awesome 82 million today. In the year 2012, this demographic explosion could reach 100 million; in 2030 about 150 million. Even today, we cannot adequately feed an estimated 35-40 million already groveling in hunger. Tomorrow, they will swell even more as famished, desperate multitudes continue to invade our cities, looking for jobs and food. What do we do?

Third, our neo-liberal free trade, free enterprise economy drawn mindlessly from America and Europe has come apart. We have simply ignored the highly successful models of Asia. They largely resorted to state intervention. And they succeeded because their citizenry was blessed by a heady culture of discipline, patriotism, a constant striving for excellence, a relentless work ethic. Their savings amounted to 25-30 percent of Gross National Product, savings that were repeatedly plowed back into fast-tracking the economy.

Fourth, the elite dismally failed to educate our citizenry. It failed to give the Filipino the tools, the opportunity to acquire knowledge, to hold the brass rings of science, math, technology, modern management, advanced factory methods. Till now, we have still failed to catch up with the Scientific and Technological Revolution. We are at the tail-end of globalization. Astute foreign observers trenchantly observed our democracy was exuberant and pleasure-loving unable to buckle down to discipline and hard work, the twin essentials of nation-building.

The statistics stare us like a pack of hyenas, spitting insult and derision in our faces. The spit thickens by the hour.

Transparency International has listed the Philippines as the eleventh most corrupt country in the world. The Asian Development Bank has just declared we have the worst culture for foreign investments in Asia.

We have been previously called the "kidnap capital" of Asia if not the crime capital of Asia. Asiaweek just years ago tabulated we have more murders committed per capita than anywhere in Asia.

We have an incredible national debt of P3 trillion, a foreign debt of US\$55 billion, a budget deficit of P230 billion. Annually the amount of P200 billion or more is lost to government corruption. All this is shameless, shocking, revolting.

Conversely, China, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, progressed at an annual clip of 7 to 12 percent in GNP during the last 32 years. The Philippine average for those 32 years was a dismal 3.1 percent. Current unemployment is 13.9 percent, underemployment 25 percent. To catch up, Philippine economic growth should hit at least 7 percent annually, then hold on for at least 20 years.

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Bong Mahal free the Filipino chains

Our GDP growth, current and forecast, meanders at 4 to 4.5 percent.

No less than 2,700 Filipinos flee our borders daily in search of better opportunities abroad. Out-migration will lead to massive brain drain. Even well-employed middle class Filipinos who now fear the Republic will collapse are convinced "Our children have no future here".

No less than 250,000 homeless, half-naked children in Metro Manila roam our streets like maggots. They forage into garbage dumps, beg for alms, sleep in the open. Many prostitute themselves to survive. They are our "wretched of the earth", the human refuse we cannot hide. And we cower in shame.

Should we tolerate all these—a government run hideously amuck?

The nation must now rise in anger, in outrage before it's too late. Runaway graft and corruption define our once lovely land. Crime and violence wrack it to its depths. Poverty is its hideous body and gorgon head. Callous and greedy leadership swims our waters like man-eating sharks. The very mention of pork barrel makes us retch. We look at Congress and Malacañang. It looks like a petrifying peek at Sodom and Gomorrah.

Is everything hopeless? Have we reached a dead-end? Is the social volcano everybody fears about to erupt and engulf us all? Have we all lost the capability for national greatness?

We hardly think so. And that is why we are now launching BANGON! to fill a gaping void that has long existed in our society. Without resort to violence, BANGON! aims to ignite hope into the citizenry, unfasten its chains, rekindle the dreams of our national heroes.

We have to awaken our youth. We have to convince them there is a way out of the vast and terrible sinkhole we are in. We have to give our youth hope, courage, the vision our nation will again be on the march. They will sing the full-throated song of nationalism. They will exude boundless energy. They will unlock the Filipino genius that can move mountains, and transform our lives.

We shall never crash down again.

We must remember Andres Bonifacio's words. More than a century ago, he wrote:

*Walang mahalagang hindi inibandog
Ng may pusong mahal sa Bayang nagkukpok
Dugo yaman dunong katiisa't pagod
Bubay may abuting magkalagot-lagot!*

What is BANGON!? It is a core group of society's middle forces, driven by a fierce nationalism, love of country if you will. Ours is the realization that we have allowed ourselves to be abused too much, too long, too wantonly. And now we are terribly angry. **Tama na!** We are out to wipe the slate clean without resort to bloodshed. We are transparent. We come with clean hands. We plot no coup whatsoever.

BANGON! seeks to play a crucial role in elevating civil society to a full awareness of the ever darkening political, social and economic crisis. BANGON! believes that only nationalism can save the nation. From this will naturally flow the surging economic nationalism that will strike down the phoney and rickety in our democracy. BANGON! will stress the importance of nation-wide education. Only through mass and advanced education can we dispel the ignorance that blights our nation today. Only through the acquisition of Information Communication Technology can we tame the oppressive outriggers of globalization. Then we can eventually join the economic tigers of Asia.

It is our hope BANGON!—with the active support of nationalist elements from all sectors and strata of society—can extricate the nation from a perceived drift towards chaos and anarchy. We have unanimously chosen as BANGON! head Tito Guingona, vice president of the Philippines. In our still circumscribed nationalist world, Tito rings the strongest bell. He is a leader of exceptional distinction as he is a man of integrity, of undisputed courage, of peerless patriotism. His vision is the vision we need—a burning nationalist vision.

We firmly believe Tito Guingona is the right man at the right time in the right country to lead BANGON! These are largely the middle forces, the acknowledged dynamo of society. For they ripple with social versatility, the diversity of egalitarian thought and principle. Only they possess the critical knowledge to muster the magic of science and technology, without which we can never modernize. Tito Guingona belongs to a noble line of contemporary Filipino leaders—from Claro Recto to Ninoy Aquino—who made their mark courting a proud, patriotic, towering, majestic but still elusive destiny. This destiny we shall achieve.

Yes, BANGON! is out to scale the mountain-top. And it is there that literally and figuratively, the Filipino can sail and soar by the light of the stars.

Pilipinas kong mahal,

BANGON!

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November 20, 2003

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Recovery

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday ended a 12-year saga of delays in the government's efforts to recover the secret assets of the Marcos family with a final decision holding that \$658 million in Swiss bank deposits of the Marcoses are ill-gotten and belong to the Republic of the Philippines.

The ruling rejected the Marcoses' petition seeking reconsideration of the Court's decision of July 15, 2003, forfeiting in favor of the government the \$658 million held in escrow at the Philippine National Bank. With characteristic decisiveness, the Court, in a unanimous resolution, paved the way for the government takeover of the fund. The decision marked for the first time the application of the notion of accountability on the Marcos family for illegal wealth accumulation during the Marcos dictatorship.

It took 17 years, since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, before the government succeeded in laying claim to the Marcos wealth.

The resolution is the last in a chain of decisions of the Court that favor public interests against the claims of private interests, and these decisions include the 2001 landmark ruling which held that the coco levy funds were "public in character." A year later, the Sandiganbayan, ending a 16-year legal battle with business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco, a Marcos crony, decided that Cojuangco had illegally acquired the United Coconut Planters Bank with coconut levy funds and forfeited his shareholdings in the bank in favor of the government.

The Court's resolution on the Marcos Swiss bank deposits affirms the role of the Court as giant killer in the legal battles between the state and entrenched private wealth over assets on which the government has laid a claim in behalf of larger public interests.

In the resolution, the Court delivered a strong blow against delaying tactics, which the Marcoses used to the fullest. The Court held that the "Republic has a right for speedy disposition of this case," adding that "the people... are entitled to favorable judgment, free from vexatious, capricious and oppressive delays, the salutary objective being to restore the ownership of the Swiss deposits to the rightful owner, the Republic of the Philippines, within the shortest possible time."

President Macapagal-Arroyo understood the decision to mean that the Court had decided that the Marcos wealth "is for the use of the farmers." The Court's resolution cleared the way for funneling the wealth to finance the land reform program. It rejected an injunction clamped on the Marcos funds by US Judge Manuel Real who awarded in the 1990s \$2 billion in damages from the Marcos estate to 9,539 victims of human rights abuses during the Marcos regime.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government read into the decision more than just the end of a protracted struggle to recover at least part of the Marcos wealth. The resolution not only attacked Real's freeze order, which blocked the use of the funds for the land reform program, it meant, according to the PCGG, "our people will recover more than just \$683 million stolen from them. With this decision, our people will recover the dignity stolen from them by the Marcos dictatorship and its cronies... Filipinos can now cast off the embarrassment of letting 17 years go on without Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos ever being held to account for corruption."

The resolution places the Marcos Swiss deposits beyond the pale of compromise settlements, which the Marcos family had sought in addition to putting up a sustained legal fight to keep control of the funds. Coming amid the call of the President for "total reconciliation" with political adversaries, the Court's ruling in effect excludes the Marcos assets as a negotiable item in seeking reconciliation with the Marcoses. The ruling has put a taboo sign on the use of Marcos assets for political deals.

Illusion

AFTER THE RECENT national election, some observers argued that a two-party system was clearly visible in Japan, but that was an optical illusion.

The Liberal Democratic Party, which has ruled for all but 11 months of the past 50 years, still dominates, and the ostensible opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan, is a halfway house for disillusioned LDP politicians and an unholy alliance of the center-left and center-right.

True electoral enlightenment remains a few years away.

The Times (London)



An interesting afternoon at the Batasan

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issues

her wishes on me, she has yet to completely understand what I am doing. She has yet to understand why her son is not doing what her friends' children are doing: working in corporations with fat salaries and driving their own cars. I was hoping that by bringing her along, she would understand what I am doing and the issues that matter to me. Besides, since I left home after high school, we rarely spent time together.

We joined the protesters from various groups and universities and walked to the Batasan Complex from St. Peter's Church in Commonwealth. She was clinging to me like I used to cling to her when I was a child.

While we were marching, I pointed out to her the imposing Sandiganbayan building where the plunder case against ousted President Estrada is being heard as well as the area where poor families used to live until the government demolished them for the visit of US President George W. Bush.

I also pointed out to her the various people who were there: "That one is Fr. Robert Reyes, the running priest and that one in tight jeans—believe it or not—is Dr. Licuanan, the president of Miriam College," etc. I also introduced her to several Jesuit friends, so she would know that her son was in good(?) company.

But it was when she learned that it was singer Coritha speaking atop the lead van that her eyes widened in excitement. She said she was her and my father's favorite singer. And she was especially happy when Coritha sang a song written by the nationalist Amado V. Hernandez.

Waiting for FPJ

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



when their brains are addled by drink?

And Maceda is the man the other Lacson, Arsenio, the best mayor Manila ever had and probably the next president after Diosdado Macapagal if he had not died and left the field open for Marcos, summed up perfectly: "So young and so corrupt." What can he teach his ward, that people can always change, they do not always have to be so young?

The second thing is that FPJ is bound to be another "populist" president. By this I mean one who will pander to the public, who will try to please the public, who will make the popular rather than the tough choice when crunch time comes.

That has been his whole life. I don't know that he will risk dissent, or opposition, or hostility to push this country ahead. I don't know that he will risk his mythical image of being larger than life by confronting real life. His movies do not suggest so. They are action vehicles that do not stray very far from the successful formula, or the one that makes for hits. He is pretty much the same character in all his movies, with minor variations in names and settings.

He is a slave to formula. He cannot die in his movies because the public would be outraged by it and will stop patronizing them. As far as I can recall, his character has died in only a couple of movies, in "Agila" and a war movie I saw as a kid. In this country particularly where the movie star is his character (even Crispin Beltran, a resolute Marxist, imagines FPJ is a nationalist because Asedillo was one), an actor-president cannot betray his screen persona without risking public disapproval. That spells trouble for public administration.

After Coritha's song, my mother turned serious as she listened intently to coconut farmers from various provinces take turns in denouncing Danding Cojuangco and his minions in Congress. She listened as leaders from urban poor groups called on Congress to stop politicking and instead work for the poor. She listened to student leaders from various universities take turns in explaining that while they were not against the investigation of corruption, they were against unconstitutional impeachment and that while the leading complainants in the impeachment case were young congressmen, they did not represent the true ideals of the Filipino youth.

Like the rest of the ralliers, my mother also restrained herself from laughing as one student leader repeatedly pronounced his r's the soft way instead of rolling them the Filipino way. It helped lighten the tension created by the proximity of the pro-impeachment ralliers to us, even as hundreds of policemen stood between the two opposing groups.

We went home very tired, and late that night she complained of arthritis. But it was not a bad afternoon at all. We had discovered a new way of parent-child bonding and I found a way to make myself better understood by my mother. And of course, the experience was made more memorable when we saw on TV the next day the decision of Congress to respect the Supreme Court decision.

It is difficult to know what my mother is thinking about the whole experience now—what she felt, saw (with her right eye), heard and smelled. But she says she now has something more interesting than her eye examination to tell my father, brothers, nieces and nephews when she goes back home. It's not clear what she means exactly by interesting, but certainly, issues of justice, rule of law, good leadership, preservation of democracy, corruption, poverty and inequality should be of interest to every Filipino, young and old alike.

I would not worry if he were one of those actors/directors who took risks to elevate the public taste, or improve the public mind. Lino Brocka was so. He did not pander to the public, he educated it. He did not take melodrama and wring it dry, he took melodrama and made it dramatic.

Frank Capra, the American movie director who made a string of critically and commercially successful movies, among them "Mr. Deeds Goes to Washington," did refute at one point the notion that moviemakers were at the mercy of the public, they could only do what the public wanted. He said the public never really knew what it wanted, it only recognized what it wanted when it saw it. Therefore, moviemakers could always make intelligent movies, they could always show the public they wanted something better. I don't know that Brocka knew about Capra's point, I do know he practiced it. What makes for a good director makes for a good president.

FPJ's supporters say he has a good heart and has no taint of corruption. Well, if that is all we need, Mother Teresa would be our best bet. Or any monk from a monastery in the mountaintops of this country. I'd have no problems with a Lino Brocka who has proven that he has the vision to defy convention to do the right thing. With FPJ, I can only think of the title of a movie Brocka once made: "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang."

And finally, this country stands to lose by having another folk hero shown to have feet of clay. Erap was larger than life before he entered the heart of real life, which is politics, and he ended up being smaller than life. Mention Erap today and the first thing you will think of is not Asiong Salonga but Jose Velarde. That is a very steep fall, and gives a more sinking feeling than an actor becoming laos or having a major movie bomb out. The same thing could happen to FPJ, who is even larger than life than Erap. He too could end up being smaller than life, with disastrous consequences not just for him but for a nation desperately needing folk heroes.

You're already Da King, why would you want to be Da Pres?

Medical treatment—and exile

AS we left Europe, a lot of scenes came over the news networks that reminded everyone how pained and anguished life around the globe has become in the face of terror attacks. In one morning, two funerals crowded out much of the world news last Tuesday: that of many victims of two separate suicide bombings of Jewish synagogues in Istanbul, and that of 19 Italian soldiers killed in a suicide bombing in Iraq. Italy declared a national day of mourning and gave the fallen soldiers a state funeral worthy of a king. Tens of thousands paid their respects to the new heroes and lined the streets of Rome to get a glimpse of their flag-draped coffins. Stores closed down all over Italy and people hung flags from the facades of their homes. The unprecedented outpouring of grief in a nation famous for *la dolce vita* reminded many of how the British turned out in the streets for the funeral of Princess Diana and the millions who grieved for Ninoy Aquino 20 years ago.

I asked an Italian guy in Frankfurt how he explained the incredible outpouring of grief. He said that apart from the fact that the tragedy was the worst that Italian troops suffered since World War II, a number of those who perished were actually members of the Italian police, the carabinieri. He said that the carabinieri have become very much a part of the daily lives of the Italian people, and they appreciate the protection they extend to them. Which is why the people felt that those who died in Iraq were family.

Over in London the super-tight security for the four-day state visit of US President Bush, the first for a US president since 1918, brought back to Filipinos memories of his visit to Manila, and we can only chuckle at the comparison. Now there are criticisms of "over-reaction" by British authorities as they field some 15,000 policemen all over London to protect Bush from militant radicals, as well as the "over-spending" for security to the tune of \$8 million so far. Bush and his wife Laura are not only visiting the Queen but staying at her palace. This can

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



only be positive for the US president, who is facing elections next November amid erosion of support back home over his handling of post-war Iraq.

What the Filipino nation should be debating is whether former President Estrada should be allowed to leave for the US for medical treatment, not whether the police action against the late Col. Panfilo Villaruel and his aide, Navy Lt. Ricardo Carchillar, was justified or not. The genial Villaruel was a friend of mine for many years and those who knew him couldn't imagine him as a "terrorist." But when he and his aide seized the airport control tower two weeks ago equipped with arms, grenades and if the police claim is true, even bombs strapped to their bodies, there was no question, difficult as it is to stress this, that what they did was an act of terrorism that bore all the potentials for inflicting greater harm on a great number of people. Thus, police authorities doubtless felt they had to recover the tower with the same means Villaruel used: force. It's easy to say in hindsight that the police "over-reacted," but at that moment the critical decision was to contain the damage with the least harm to the greatest number.

By contrast, the issue of Estrada's trip to the US, now that President Macapagal-Arroyo has signified her willingness to go along with that plan for humanitarian reasons (interpreted now by some as in aid of election), has a lot of complications. Estrada's family has been trying for years to make the court allow him to go abroad, but it has obviously accepted the argument that local

doctors are qualified to treat his knee ailment or that his American doctor, Christopher Mow, could come here to treat him. That there are local options cannot be disputed, prompting critics to assert that Estrada was merely using his ailment as an excuse to seek momentary relief from his trial for plunder.

There is little doubt that if he is allowed to go to the US, Estrada would find every excuse to prolong his stay, perhaps while hoping that a friendly opposition candidate will be elected in 2004. If Estrada is allowed to leave, then his trial would be suspended. In this connection, he recently gave an insightful statement when he said that he didn't want a pardon from the President as this would make him look guilty of the crimes he is being accused of when he has not committed any crime. If an opposition candidate makes it in 2004, it's conceivable that Estrada wouldn't want a presidential pardon either. Apparently, what he wants is to be allowed to go on exile abroad.

The problem, as the INQUIRER editorial correctly pointed out, is that whatever happens to Erap's court case will have a bearing on other pending cases such as those against the Marcoses, Eduardo Cojuangco and Panfilo Lacson. So, letting Erap go abroad is not that simple a decision.

Graz is a city in Austria that has always been in the shadow of the capital, Vienna, and Salzburg, the setting of "Sound of Music." But now it has become one of the hottest tourist destinations in Europe, not only because it was proclaimed by UNESCO as the cultural capital of the world for 2003, but because its most famous immigrant, Arnold Schwarzenegger, put it on the map by winning as California governor in a recall election. In a Vienna restaurant, an Austrian guy, after noting that we were having problems communicating with the lady taking orders, proudly introduced himself as coming from Graz, adding that "Arnold comes from there, you know."

Chairman

"DO you like what you've written?"

That was the question Totoy Avellana, or "Chairman" to most of us who had the privilege of working with him, used to ask. In an industry like advertising, "liking what you've written" is hardly a useful measure of whether a material is good enough to be shown to the client. But to him that was his gauge of how far a writer would go to perfect even the simplest assignment.

Even when he was already in his mid-70s, Chairman still acted like he was the creative director for a bunch of twentysomethings who ran around the halls of the advertising agency he had founded, the place where many current industry leaders began their career.

In his deep and husky voice, which reminded everyone of Louis Armstrong, I would sometimes hear him asking an officemate in the hallway leading to his office, "Where's Myra?" Then after a few minutes the phone would ring and, as I expected, it would be his secretary on the other line saying, "Tawag kayo ni Sir."

A lot of us, young creative people then, did not always welcome being called into Chairman's office, for it meant not getting any work done for hours! But on most days, these meetings gave us just what we needed: a shot of inspiration from the man we all looked up to.

"Get your stuff. I want to see what you're working on." He would order us.

Even if technically, he was no longer the agency's creative director, Chairman continued to play that role for so many years. And so with all the excitement of budding "creatives," my fellow writers and our artists would tell him about the projects we were working on. He would listen attentively, puffing at one cigarette stick after another and looking very much like Marlon Brando in "The Godfather."

Being the true mentor that he was, Chairman would then contribute his inputs on each concept—a softer approach, a stronger line, an alternative ending. In between these comments were countless stories on past campaigns he had worked on—back in the days when there were no computers, when artists drew print ads and TV storyboards by hand, when the agency was just starting and his staff consisted of a small group of friends.

Oh how he loved to reminisce! And he loved the strange industry we had chosen to be part of.

During one of the major pitches we had, Chairman volunteered to make the presentation, something he was no longer wont to do. He did so not only because some of the other bosses were out of the country, but because he really wanted to.

I still remember it very well. The minute he started talking, he had the entire room eating out of his hand. That's how powerful his presence was.

When my turn came to show the materials we had prepared, I felt so scared as I stood up and faced everyone. Not because I was intimidated by the clients but because Chairman was there and he would be watching me.

A few minutes later, as my eyes moved across the room, I saw him listening closely to what I was saying and on his face was a look that said, "Just keep going."

The presentation went smoothly. Our clients were obviously impressed.

As we walked back to the parking lot, Chairman put his arm around my shoulder and said, "I think we can now put up our own ad agency. Just us."

I loved him.

Before I left his company, I wrote him a letter thanking him for everything. I also told him then that I hoped to marry someone exactly like him someday.

From that time on whenever I'd come for a visit, he would ask: "Have you found someone like me yet?"

"No, sir, I haven't. But I'm looking," I would answer.

To which he would respond, matter-of-factly, "Well, it's not that easy, I tell you."

To this day, I haven't found anyone exactly like Chairman—someone with a passion for all things creative, someone who understands the struggles of frustrated artists and who is a source of strength for weary minds and whose heart is so big that there is enough room for everyone who walks into his life.

On Oct. 28 this year, Chairman passed away. But if he were to ask me at this very moment if I like what I have written, I would answer: "Yes, sir. I like it because I wrote it especially for you."

Myra E. Carabeo, 29, works as a copywriter with Image Dimensions Inc. She wrote this piece as a tribute to the person who made a big difference in her life, Totoy Avellana, former chairman of Avellana & Associates.

IN THE NEWS



Manny Pacquiao

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Why women shouldn't be dying of cervical cancer

ON THE FACE of it, women shouldn't be dying of cervical cancer anymore. It is a "fully preventable" disease, since medicine has already determined what causes it and tests have been devised not just to detect cancerous cells and pre-cancerous lesions, but even the presence of the virus linked to the disease.

The human papilloma virus (HPV) has been detected in 99.7 percent of cervical cancer cases. It is a fairly common virus (it belongs to the family of viruses that causes warts), and HPV infection is usually transient, meaning it usually goes away by itself, in younger women. But persistent HPV infection usually means a woman is at high risk of developing cervical cancer, though even then it usually takes about 10 years before cancer develops. So clearly, the earlier HPV is detected, the better a woman's chances of surviving, and indeed preventing cervical cancer.

Dr. Attila Lorincz, who is credited with developing the HPV hybrid DNA test for Digene Corp., says the chances of "defeating" cervical cancer are much more promising than for breast cancer. Researchers still don't know what exactly causes breast cancer, and the tests devised for it, including the mammogram, can detect it only after tumors or cysts have developed.

But why do so many women still continue to die of cervical cancer? Worldwide, some 400,000 women develop cervical cancer each year, and 200,000 will die. This makes cervical cancer, after breast cancer, the second most common malignancy found in women. In much of the developing world, it is the leading cause of death among women between the ages of 40 and 60 years.

This holds true for the Philippines. While breast cancer is the most common form of cancer for women in the country, it is not the most deadly. The death toll from cervical cancer is higher than for breast cancer, and this is mainly because by the time its victims come for treatment, it is already too late.

THE SECRET to upping survival rates among women with cervical cancer is clearly early detection and screening to identify women at

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



high risk of developing the disease.

Prof. Albert Singer of the Whittington Hospital in the United Kingdom, speaking on the "Natural History of HPV Infection and Cervical Cancer," recalls that a national screening program for cervical cancer in the UK began only in 1988. Before then, the increase in the death rate due to cervical cancer among British women was among the highest in the world. Widespread screening, said Singer, is now believed to have prevented 10,000 future cases and 5,000 future deaths due to cervical cancer.

There's a fairly common and affordable test for cervical cancer that's been around for more than 50 years now. Developed by Dr. George Papanicolaou, the "pap smear" involves the harvesting of cells from the cervix (with the aid of a speculum), which are then smeared on a slide and then examined under the microscope to detect any abnormalities.

Quick and easy to perform on an out-patient basis, mass screening with the use of the pap smear is both "a triumph and a tragedy," remarks Lorincz. Since its adoption as a public health measure, the pap smear has led to an impressive 70-80 percent decrease in cervical cancer cases in the United States. But the screening program, on which some \$6 billion a year is being spent, has yet to prevent an estimated 12,000 cases and 4,500 deaths a year.

ONE reason pap smears miss so many cases is that it has a tendency to result in a lot of "false negatives," that is, a woman may already have cancer or pre-cancerous lesions or abnormal cells, but

these are somehow overlooked or missed in the process of harvesting the cells for testing or in interpreting the smears.

Lorincz adds that apart from the "low sensitivity" of the traditional pap smear, another reason for its limited success, especially in the developing world, is the reluctance of women to come in for tests. Other reasons for the failure—or absence—of mass screening that were advanced at the First Asian HPV Summit: the limited reach of programs due to the need for an extensive health infrastructure (such as enough labs and trained personnel to read the results), delays in transmitting the results of the lab tests to the women (which in the Philippines can be as long as two months), and the subjective manner of interpreting the results, which speaks to the competence of pathologists and lab personnel.

Lately, other diagnostic tests have been introduced, such as the acetic acid wash, which can make lesions or abnormal cells visible even to the naked eye, with no need for lab testing. Other methods of harvesting cervical cells have also become popular, such as the use of a "broom" or "brush," as well as a small spatula, that reduces the chances of missing problematic cells that could produce a "false negative."

A DISTINCT advantage of these new tests is that they can be employed at the same time to test for the presence of HPV. The only reason HPV screening is not more common around the world is arguably cost. In the Philippines, an HPV test costs P2,900, although participants at the Summit agree that once the test becomes more common, the price could conceivably plummet to more affordable levels.

But even at present price levels, said speakers at the Summit, HPV testing already makes economic sense since it reduces the need for annual pap smears. The current guidelines of the American Cancer Society, for instance, call for HPV/pap screening every three years for women over 25 years, and after three negative results, testing may no longer be necessary.

Organic rice festival

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



the (un)Green Revolution is called "conventional." It's time to turn this around.

The Organic Rice Festival at Glorietta is one way to push this, to make people support the efforts by buying organic. When organic becomes thoroughly mainstreamed and sustainable, the economics part will fall into place. We will pay less, eat well and live healthily.

Since 1997, the Philippine Development Assistance Programme (PDAP) has been into Promoting Participation in Sustainable Enterprises (PPSE). PDAP says it is now "refocusing its thrust to fulfill the upscaling of four anchor enterprises," etc. A journalist would simplify this corporate jargon by saying that PDAP is now shifting its focus on four main areas: production of organic rice and organic fertilizer, food processing and handicrafts. Of the four, organic rice production has the highest potential of becoming full-scale.

PDAP is composed of Filipino and Canadian NGOs involved in poverty alleviation. These NGOs have been working closely with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for more than 16 years.

PDAP points out that the government's rice productivity programs that use high-yielding varieties and high chemical inputs have not resulted in rice sufficiency. Studies have shown that the Green Revolution technology has wreaked havoc on farmlands.

For organic rice yield and income to increase, small farming households must be supported and protected from external pressures. Locally available technologies must be promoted and indigenous farming practices must be preserved.

"ORGANIC ang pag-ibig ko sa iyo, Hindi genetically modified ako..." This sang Joey Ayala at the opening of the one-week Organic Rice Festival at the Glorietta in Makati last Monday.

What is organic? All living things are organic. I had one semester of Organic Chemistry which I barely passed, but looking back now, it certainly was more understandable than the other chemistry courses I had taken. I can still remember all those hydrogen chains on the blackboard and then floating in my mind at night. But until now I have not ceased asking the impertinent question: How did anyone know they looked like that?

When I hear someone saying organic rice, I am tempted to say, "Of course, it is organic." Imagine eating something inorganic, like pebbles or motor oil.

Organic refers to living organisms or anything derived from them. Water is a major component of all living matter. When true believers say organic this or organic that, they're not saying there is such a thing as non- or inorganic rice or veggies. It's just a way of saying that the food they are referring to, as well as the fertilizers, pesticides and animal feeds used to make them grow, have not been tainted with synthetic and toxic chemicals. Meaning, all-natural, from nature, organic. Not genetically altered too. The meaning of the word organic has now expanded.

Straightaway I must say that the problem with so-called organic rice is not in semantics but in its price. It is more expensive than the "not organic" (meaning not grown in the all-natural way) because it takes more effort and resources to grow it. Also, poisoned land has first to be brought back to its natural condition. It was not like this before the advent of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

The good news is that many people's organizations, NGOs and environmentally correct institutions all over the world are helping bring back the ancient way of growing things and in a more scientific way.

Organic rice farming as part of sustainable agriculture has been wrongly called "alternative" (because marginalized?) while the high-yielding, chemical-dependent technology propagated by

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

We're simply not ready for change

WHAT is happening to our country now is a taste of what is to come if we change our form of government from presidential to parliamentary. With our congressmen so petty, so completely corrupt with power and so willing to sell their signatures to the highest bidder, anyone who has the money can easily dictate who the prime minister should be and what laws to pass.

Our country's political system is still immature—people who don't deserve to be janitors in any government office are voted into the highest places of government. Our immediate past president whom we only thought to be a womanizer, etc. is now accused of plunder! Many of the people voted into the Senate are either actors or TV personalities—broadcasters, comedians, a basketball player, etc. with no legislative experience at all. No, even a person accused of being a drug lord, murderer, etc. is hoping to be president and the survey shows that he could win!

Only when we have an educated electorate can we look into having a parliamentary form of government—if we should have one at all. Right now, only the congressmen—for very ob-

vious (millions of) reasons—want this form of government. And to make sure they get it the way they want it, they want to form themselves into a Constituent Assembly where *lutong macau* style—they can cook up a constitution that will surely serve their interests first, the people's next, if at all. And what would happen to our bureaucracy with governments changing every time a higher bidder comes in and changes the prime minister and all the ministers (department secretaries)? Government will be in chaos—new government plans every month or two months or so—and nothing ever completed. Of course, with the kind of congressmen we have, they may not even have any plans for the government, only for themselves. Pity the Filipino people.

What's wrong with a presidential form of government anyway? The most powerful nation in the world is using a presidential form of government and is certainly doing very well—though overdoing it sometimes.

—CARMELO S. DOROTHEO,
4548 Clover Rd.,
Sun Valley Subdivision,
Parañaque City

Rekindled hope

I JUST finished reading Asuncion David Maramba's article, "Open letter to some 'Spice' and 'Bright Boys'" in the *INQUIRER*'s Nov. 8 issue on the Internet as I am here in New York. I was deeply touched by her message. The strong words clearly paint the situation we are in as a people. I say so because, like her, I am also a teacher.

Before I went out of the country, I taught at the College of the Holy Spirit on Mendiola and I

always looked at the youth as the hope of our country. With the youth steeped in energy and idealism, we can always hope for a "way of life" that would position us as a people toward the fullness of life. What is happening however in our country cannot but shatter this sense of hope. Maramba's article has enkindled it anew.

—MARIA CONSOLACION MATNAO, SSPS,
maco@vivatinternational.org

But is the dike safer now?

IN CONNECTION with the article titled "Safety of P2.7-B dike doubted" (*PDI*, 10/21/03, P.A16), we would like to transmit to you the reaction of our Region III Office on the said report:

Director Josefino Rigor of our Region III Office clarifies that the damages sustained by the Transverse Dike in August 1997 were restored and rehabilitated immediately after the incident. After analysis and studies of the incident, improvements on the original design of the spillway were also made by providing steel sheet piles and lowering the crest elevation. At present, six years after, the Transverse Dike remains stable and continues to serve its purpose of protecting lives and property in nearby towns.

As to the alleged section of the Megadike that was severely eroded last year, Rigor claims

that contrary to the news report, damage was not due to mere slight rains but to days of continuous heavy downpour brought about by typhoon "Kaka" on the night of July 13, 2002. This was based on situational reports filed in their office. Apparently, a 300-m section of the Old Gugu Dike was quarried by unscrupulous operators working on the dike to breach it, and this has caused floodwaters to meander directly toward a 100-m section of the East Lateral Dike at Barangay Calzadang Bayu, Porac, Pampanga, which eventually caused the scouring. This section of the dike was likewise immediately restored after the said occurrence.

—JENNIFER D. PUNZALAN,
officer in charge, Information Division,
Department of Public Works and Highways,
Office of the Secretary, Manila

New challenges for health professionals

FROM YEARS of teaching, I've learned to mechanically rattle off the country's leading causes of death: pneumonia, heart disease, tuberculosis, cancer...

What if I suddenly mentioned WOT (War on Terror) and WTO (World Trade Organization) among those leading causes of death? It'd probably shock my students, but that is the message that comes out of a meeting of some 120 health professionals held in Manila from Nov. 8 to 10. The meeting was dubbed the International Conference on Challenges to Health Work Amidst Globalization and War, with delegates from Belgium, Canada, the Congo, Finland, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Nicaragua, the Philippines and the United States.

I was not able to attend but one of the organizers, Sr. Mayang Grenough, sent me the summarized proceedings. Mayang, some readers will remember, is my favorite "American Pinay," a nurse and Maryknoll sister who has lived in the Philippines for more than 40 years now, totally devoted to community health care.

Many of the other health professionals attending the conference have backgrounds similar to Mayang's, people working with the poorest of the poor. Amid the skyscrapers and the high-tech wonders of the 21st century, they see a global worsening of the health situation, which they blame on the policies of the developed countries, mainly the US government.

They point to the diversion of funds away from social services to George W. Bush's so-called War on Terror. The conference participants referred to war casualties, as well as the financial costs of the war: \$81 billion spent so far on the war in Iraq, with an estimated \$50 to \$60 billion needed annually for the occupation.

It's not surprising that the conference included Americans speaking out against their government's policies. It's their taxes that are used for the wars and it's their young women and men who are sent off as cannon fodder. Their own public health budgets have been slashed back, even as

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan



44 million Americans live without health insurance of any kind.

Global health suffers as well from the skewed priorities. One billion dollars a year could result in effective malaria control in Africa for example, or support global tuberculosis control programs that would decrease by one half the total deaths from that disease. Nine billion dollars could provide safe water systems for all of the world's poor communities.

The conference participants rejected Bush's claims of bringing democracy to Iraq and Afghanistan, seeing the wars there as part of the US government's effort to consolidate its control over oil sources in the Middle East. They also named the Philippines as an "epicenter" for still another US military strategy, that of "establishing a forward operation base in Southeast Asia."

But WOT is only part of a larger package to establish "monopoly control" over the global economy, according to the conference participants. They also lashed out at the WTO and its imposition of "free trade" policies which only favor developed countries. TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) was renamed "Treasure and Robbery by Imposters and Patent Swindlers," criticized for depriving developing countries of the medicines they need.

Besides the inequities of "free trade," the conference participants also criticized the way international financing institutions have forced developing countries to privatize health care while cutting down on what's left of government services.

There was also extensive discussion about brain drain, seen as a consequence too of global inequities. With countries like the Philippines

unable to provide decent wages, it's not surprising that health professionals leave for developed countries where they end up "exploited, overworked, underpaid and de-skilled." (The de-skilling is of course best exemplified by physicians who end up working as medical assistants or as nurses.)

The conference proceedings got me to dig up some local figures which might help us to think of how WOT and WTO affect our health.

We might want to reflect on our 2004 national budget, currently proposed at P864 billion. That's about \$15.6 billion, a paltry amount compared to the \$399 billion allocated by the United States for its military next year. But even that tiny budget for running the country is going to be further emasculated, with a third of the budget, or P271 billion, going to debt servicing alone, much of it owed to international creditors. No wonder that while we need 44,000 new public school classrooms, the 2004 budget allocates only P1.64 billion to build 4,375 rooms. How do we expect the next generation of Filipinos to think of healthy lifestyles when they have to bring their own chairs to school, share textbooks, meet outside and under the sun?

Another important budget-related statistic: Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo was quoted in Tuesday's newspapers as saying that US and European farmers receive between \$50,000 and \$100,000 a year in government subsidies, compared to about \$20 extended to our farmers by our government. Yet, our farmers and livestock raisers are expected to compete with US and European imports as part of the WTO's "free" trade policies. Think now of what happens to the health of a vegetable farming family in Trinidad Valley when their livelihood goes under, unable to compete with the imports.

There's more to illness than germs and diseases with kilometeric tongue-twisting names. Sometimes they come deceptively simple, like WOT and WTO.

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

18th PAC welcomes delegates

BAGUIO CITY (Bayantel) - Delegates to the 18th Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC) arrived here yesterday in the land of strawberries and ukay ukay to register for the big event slated on November 19-22, 2003 at the CAP Convention Center, Camp John Hay. Most delegates arrived early in the morning in anticipation of a "registration rush" later in the day. Over 3,000 delegates were expected to attend the big event.

As early as 8 a.m., delegates trooped to the convention site to wait for the registration booths to open. As it turned out, advertising practitioners, top advertisers, suppliers and students were in for a smooth, well-administered registration process at the lobby of the newly-built CAP Convention Center. 18th PAC administration committee chairman Dodie Lucas, managing director of Roadrunner Network Inc., was on hand to supervise the registration, along with members of the Ad Congress Secretariat and student volunteers that milled around the area to ensure that the registration would be hassle-free.

Likewise, the IT group of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. was all geared up to provide technical support in case the computer system of the registration would bog down.

This year, registration was made stricter and tighter compared to previous Ad Congresses. The administration committee also conceptualized a pay-per-session scheme for those who weren't able to get registration slots but want to listen to fresh insights from local and international

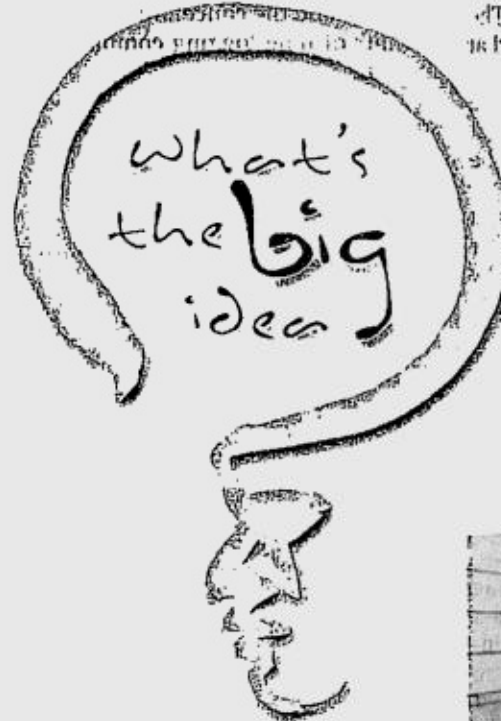
advertising experts invited to grace the Ad Congress. Sessions are priced at P500 per session (morning and afternoon sessions).

"We want everyone to get the chance to learn from the experts. We have a host of experts talking about their real world and sharing their ingenuity. Learning will be fun and exciting for this Congress," said Lucas.

Of the 3,000 delegates, roughly 500 are students and representatives from academe. Students from University of Asia and the Pacific (UAP) reported a quick pace of the registration that took them just a couple of minutes to queue and secure their IDs and Ad Congress kits. According to them, they are excited to attend the Ad Congress sessions and participate in the official activities.

Upon registration, delegates were given an Ad Congress Survival Guide, the 18th Ad Congress Coffeeable Book, and the official Congress bag sponsored by Philippine Daily Inquirer.

The city's accredited hotels also welcomed the delegates upon their arrival. Roads leading to the convention center brimmed with colorful banners from sponsors. Delegates were delighted at the warm reception accorded them upon their arrival. Smiles of the usherettes, mostly student volunteers from Baguio City, greeted the delegates and were given roses by The Philippine Star upon their entrance. Sponsors' booths also lined up the entrance of the convention center and gave delegates company giveaways and freebies.



Big Ideas roll out on 18th PAC opening

BAGUIO CITY (Bayantel) - The 18th Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC) officially begins today with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo addressing over 3,000 delegates in the opening ceremony to be held at the CAP John Hay Trade and Cultural Center at Camp John Hay, Baguio City.

This year's Ad Congress theme, "What's the Big Idea," is a bold attempt to thrust Philippine advertising into the global arena, banking on big Filipino ideas that have the potential to make the country one of the world's creative capitals.

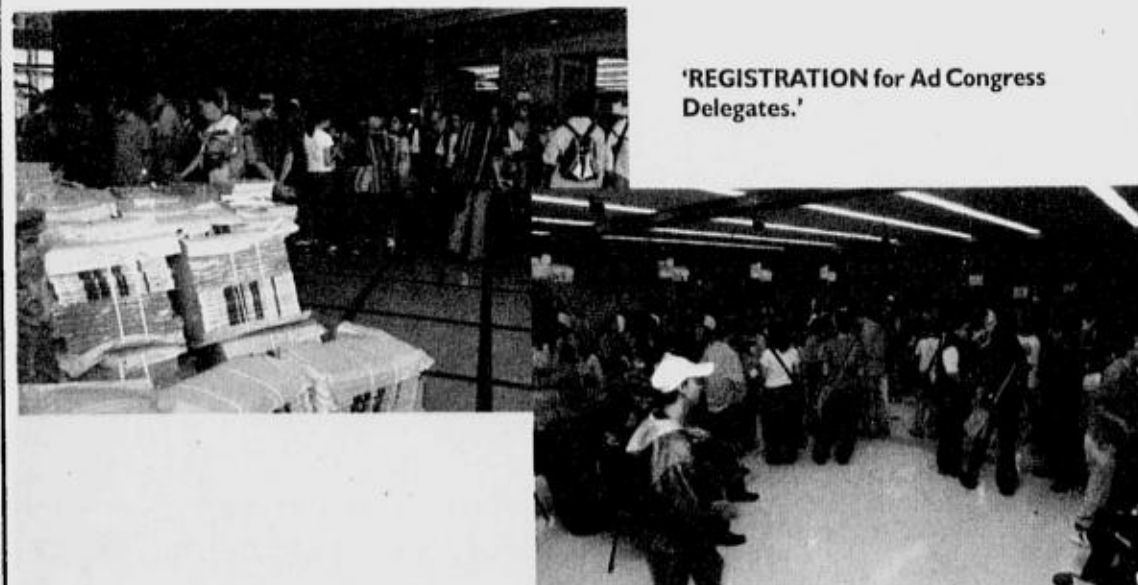
Right after her keynote speech, the President leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony that formally opens the trade exhibit located at the west wing of the convention center. Various sponsors and partners of the Ad Congress have put up imaginative and technologically advanced exhibit booths showcasing their products and services.

At 10 a.m., the first session of the Congress begins with Australian resource speaker Jim Aitchison sharing his insights on the topic "Big Ideas in Advertising". Aitchison is the creative director of The

Ball Partnership and executive director of Batey Ads Group. The second session follows with J. Walter Thompson (Malaysia) managing director Chris Von Selle giving a talk on the topic "From Systems to Soul" while CNN Asia-Pacific president Steven Marcopoto lectures on "International Media" on the third session.

The afternoon will be intensified by another powerhouse lineup of speakers and topics. Cyril Pereira, Telesis Consulting Limited managing director, will enlighten delegates on the new role of print media on the topic "Quality Newspapers: The Search for a New Value Proposition". Gina Lopez, ABS-CBN Foundation managing director, and Yoly Ong, Campaigns and Grey founder and CEO, will head the discussions on "Social Responsibility and Advocacy Advertising in the Philippine Context".

Capping the day are cocktails and dinner at the CAP John Hay sponsored by San Miguel Corporation and ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., respectively. The Philippine Star and ABC-5 started the ball rolling for the Ad Congress with their opening cocktails last night held in different venues.



'REGISTRATION for Ad Congress Delegates.'

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
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Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
23 Aurora St., Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonla

Woman, kids flee from kidnappers

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A woman and her two children were found by soldiers in Tuburan, Basilan Tuesday dawn after they fled their kidnappers believed to be members of the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf.

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, chief of the 1st Tabak Infantry Division, identified the victims as Noraida Hayudini, and her children Jerada, 6 and Ferwina, 1.

"They were intercepted by our troops, the 18th Infantry Battalion, who were conducting patrol in the area (sic)," Salazar told the INQUIRER.

Noraida, according to Salazar, is suffering from trauma, "but she gave pieces of information that led to the ongoing military operation in Tuburan."

Brig. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, 103rd Army Brigade commander, said he believes that an Abu Sayyaf faction based in Sulu could be behind the kidnapping. "Noraida belongs to a wealthy fam-

ily in Sulu. Her father was the former mayor of Jolo while her brother, Hasser, is the present mayor of Patikul," Ramos said.

Noraida claimed that the kidnappers demanded a P1-million ransom. Ramos said Noraida told investigators their captors "kept them in the jungle."

"They slept in the forest, that is why her children are suffering from serious skin diseases," said Ramos.

Noraida said they were abducted by four armed men in this city in August this year.

She said the suspects followed them from Sulu to this city where they were abducted. She said from the day of their abduction, they were

transferred from one place to another in Zamboanga City, and on Oct. 26, they were brought to Tuburan.

Noraida and her children escaped from their captors, some of whom were sleeping while the others were preparing for prayer, on Tuesday dawn.

She said they crawled for more than three hours until she saw soldiers.

The Abu Sayyaf is responsible for a spate of kidnappings, bombings and killings around Mindanao.

It has been identified as one of several terrorist groups that has links with the Al-Qaida.

The US government sent US troops to Mindanao to train Filipino soldiers on how to deal with terrorism, particularly the Abu Sayyaf, but members of the Abu Sayyaf continue to elude government forces. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Extortion letters alarm GenSan traders

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The proliferation of extortion letters supposedly coming from the terrorist group Jamaah Islamiyah has alarmed businessmen and authorities in Koronadal City.

Senior Supt. Romeo Rufino, South Cotabato police director, said several businessmen in the province received extortion letters signed by a certain Talal al-Skoti.

In the letters, Al-Skoti introduced himself as a member of the JI sent to Mindanao for terrorism and would sow terror should his demand for protection money be ignored.

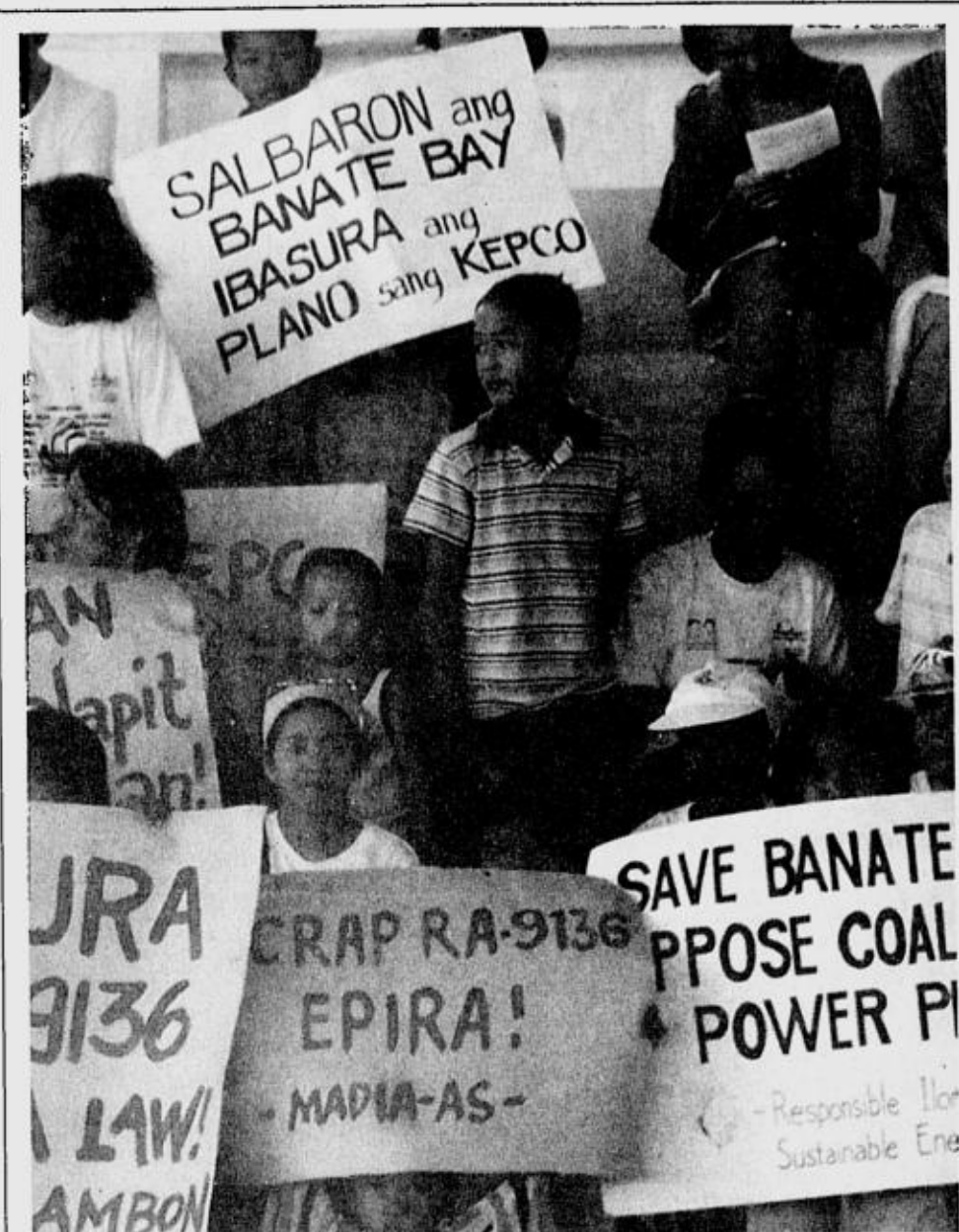
"Don't you want your place to become peaceful?" the letters said.

Koronadal was rocked by four separate bomb attacks this year that killed 13 people and wounded

more than 50 others.

Rufino said authorities already know the identity of the suspect behind the extortion.

He said the penmanship in the extortion letters sent by Al-Skoti to the businessmen were similar to the handwriting of Abusama Abas, one of the prime suspects in a series of bomb explosions. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



ENVIRONMENT VANGUARDS

The first line of defense against perceived threats to the environment shows the stuff they're made of in the person of these villagers of Banate, Iloilo who went out to protest a planned coal-fired power plant in their community.

NESTOR BURGOS/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

ROUNDUP

Diarrhea kills 2

BASISTA, Pangasinan—Two children died and 21 others from Sitio Paraiso in Barangay Dumpay here were confined in hospitals after suffering from diarrhea. Dr. Nemesia Mejia, Pangasinan health officer, said the diarrhea outbreak was already under control although an epidemiological team was still investigating the cause. A report of the municipal health office said Joemar Erquiza, 14, and Noel Bulatao, 4, died while they were being taken to the hospital on Nov. 6. Most victims suffered from vomiting and diarrhea, which health workers said are symptoms of acute gastroenteritis caused by viral and parasitic organisms. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

3 die in mishap

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Three people were killed while two others were hurt when a jeep bumped them in Solana, Cagayan, police said. Senior Supt. Rodrigo de Gracia, Cagayan police director, identified the fatalities as Juan and Catalina Constantino and Macario Castillo. Two others, Maria Goyagoy and Remedios Padierlo, were taken to the St. Paul Hospital in Tuguegarao City. Tito Hermitiano, the jeep's driver, said he lost control of his vehicle when the headlights of an incoming truck impaired his vision. The jeep hit the victims who were walking along a road shoulder in Barangay Lingu. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Korean loses P1M

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—Two unidentified motorcycle-riding men armed with hand pistols held up a Korean national and took more than P1 million in cash along Ortigas Avenue, Barangay San Isidro, Taytay, Rizal on Saturday. Police said Nam Joo Bac, 53, owner of Sejin Apparel Corp. in Taytay, Rizal, was on his way to deliver the salary of his workers when the suspects bumped his Honda Civic car. The victim said one of the suspects ordered him at gunpoint to open his car and then grabbed the bag containing the payroll money. The victim later said he had withdrawn the money from a bank in Taytay on Friday together with his driver Bobby Santiago. He also told police that he suspected Santiago of being involved in the robbery. Police went to the driver's house in Taytay to invite him for questioning but his neighbors said the driver-turned-suspect had left for Romblon with his father. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

GSIS infomercial hit

CALAMBA CITY—A church-based anti-graft and corruption group in Southern Tagalog has labeled the new TV infomercial of the Government Security and Insurance Service as "a brazen lie and a product of imagination." The ad shows the picture of a family falling from a panel board probably due to financial woes. A hand, apparently symbolizing the GSIS, catches the falling picture frame in time, saving it from destruction. Christians for Good Government spokesman and United Churches of Christ in the Philippines Bishop Elzler Pascua said the advertisement was clearly made to dispel charges of corruption and inefficiency thrown against GSIS president William Garcia by government employees. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

9 climbers lost on Ozamiz mountain

OZAMIZ CITY—The search was widened at the Malintang mountain range for nine mountaineers who got lost and could now be starving.

The search started 1 p.m. yesterday after a search team sent by Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. failed to find the mountaineers.

Mostly in their 20s, the climbers set off for Malindang's north peak Nov. 12 in Sitio Tipan in Barangay Stimson Abordo here.

Aljune Quinones, president of the Saag Mountaineering and a member of the Malindang Mountaineering Alliance (Mama), said the nine mountaineers took part in a three-day trek program of the Mama. They were headed by experienced Malindang trekker Nino Neri, president of Mama and of the Conquest Adventurers Team.

The trek program took the mountaineers to the north peak and was expected to wind down in hinterland Barangay Migsali of Bonifacio town Nov. 16.

But around 10 p.m. Sunday, Quinones received a text message from Neri's team saying they got lost and were out of food.

It was the last contact made by the climbers.

When the last contact was made, said Quinones, the climbers were already on the south peak, presumably heading for Migsali village, which has a dense forest cover and is about 800 meters above sea level.

Jason Ang, a member of Saag Mountaineering, said the climbers were not familiar with the trail as it was their first time there.

Ryan Rosaura, PDI Mindanao Bureau

10,000 sign petition to stop logging in Aurora

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A multi-sectoral group in Aurora said it gathered more than 10,000 signatures in a campaign for a total log ban in the province and the cancellation of permits of nine logging companies there.

In a statement, Joey Estriber, spokesperson of the Multi-Sectoral Action Group (MSAG)-Aurora, said the number of signatures would be 20,000 when they finalize the schedule of a dia-

logue with Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun.

The group, said Estriber, asked Gozun to immediately stop the operations of the Pacific Timber Export Corp. in Dilasag town; Industries Development Corp. in Dilasag, Dinalungan and Casiguran towns; RCC in Dinalungan; Toplite Lumber in Dipaculao town; Verdant Agro-Forest Development Corp. also in Dipaculao; Inter-Pacific Forest Resources Corp. in San Luis and Dingalan

towns; Benson Realty Development Corp. in San Luis; San Roque Sawmill Corp. in San Luis; and the Green Circle Properties Corp. in Dingalan.

Executives of these timber companies met last month in Metro Manila to oppose the ban, said Bong Siquian, Toplite vice president.

The nine companies, Siquian said, had been responsible and employs hundreds of Aurora residents.

Sand quarrying threatening safety of fence protecting Expo Pilipino

MABALACAT, Pampanga—Massive quarry operations along the Bamban-Sacobia River near the Expo Pilipino is threatening the safety of Clark's northern perimeter fence restored last year to protect the P3.5-billion mothballed park.

The extraction of sand, INQUIRER sources said, was illegal in this part because this did not have the permit and fee collectors used fake receipts.

Several receipts obtained by the INQUIRER at the site on Monday night showed that the provincial capitol, through three supposed employees, collected P200 in excise tax from drivers hauling sand near the Expo Pilipino.

The receipts were stamped with the name of provincial treasurer Vergel Yabut as collecting officer.

While it was marked "PTO-Pampanga (Provincial Treasurer's Office-Pampanga)" and twice stamped "used," the upper part of the receipts bearing

their number was torn and not given to the drivers.

The back portion of the receipts was stamped "CDC used."

CDC referred to the Clark Development Corp., the state-owned body managing the conversion of the Clark Air Base into a special economic zone.

Emmanuel Angeles, CDC president, on Tuesday said he was verifying the reports on quarrying operations. He said, however, that the CDC was strict on allowing sand extraction near the Expo Pilipino.

The CDC had, in the past, allowed the desilting of the river.

In July last year when three typhoons battered Central Luzon, floodwaters scoured the riverbanks, exposing the fence and leaving a gap of some 200 meters of soft soil from the park.

A few days before these occurred, 100 houses in two Aeta villages were washed out. The CDC had the banks fortified with a 300-

meter long dike made of boulders.

Provincial Administrator Benalfe Galang confirmed that the provincial capitol collected the P200-excite tax in the same area "in agreement with the CDC."

But Angeles said he could not immediately confirm this.

Galang could not identify the quarry operators in the area but said they got permits from the CDC.

"Definitely, no," he said on reports that he or Gov. Manuel Lapid was involved in quarry operations there.

Yabut, whose office handles tax collection, could not tell if the provincial government was collecting quarry taxes in the Bamban-Sacobia area.

Sand extraction in the area, according to the sources, began last month when the Department of Public Works and Highways closed the San Felipe portion of Mababacat for a bridge project. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

4 hurt in explosion in Cebu City school

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Four persons were injured in an explosion inside the Alaska Elementary School in Barangay Mambaling this city past 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

Police authorities, however, have yet to confirm what kind of explosive was detonated.

The explosion occurred when some students and parents gathered in the school ground to witness United Nations Day programs.

Hurt were Alvin Montemayor, 13 and secondary student of the

Gothong Memorial High School; Violeta Caballero, 35; Pedia Abella, 36; and Leo Sanchez, 38. They were watching the school activity when the explosion occurred.

The victims were brought to the Cebu City Medical Center (CCMC) but were later released after receiving medical treatment.

SPO2 Gualberto Oro, investigator of the Mambaling Police Station, said Montemayor saw and picked up an aluminum part of a fluorescent lamp in the school garden.

The object fell from Montemayor's hand but exploded

when he picked it up again.

Montemayor's right hand and foot were injured. The other three victims were near Montemayor when the explosion occurred.

There were conflicting reports as to what caused the explosion.

Oro said the explosive could just be a blasting cap or a firecracker. Police said they recovered the aluminum material that was picked up by Montemayor.

SPO1 Ben Ngujo, another policeman in Mambaling, said the explosion could have been triggered by a molotov cocktail

left by members of warring factions.

But Supt. Paul Labra, police Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Bureau, said the explosion was caused by a firecracker and not by a molotov as stated in the Mambaling police blotter.

He said Senior Supt. Cecil Ezra Sandalo, Cebu City Police chief, reprimanded the Mambaling police for coming out with an erroneous report, which triggered panic.

Labra said teenagers usually play with firecrackers, the same kind that exploded inside the elementary school.

INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandayrel

Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

How not to treat a whale shark

By Michael B. Jaucian
and Ronnie L. Lorejo
Pioduran, Albay

ALBIYANOS, especially environmentalists, were shocked to learn on the morning of Nov. 3 that a whale shark known locally as *butanding* was caught by some residents of Barangay Basicao in Pioduran, Albay.

The 7-meter gentle giant, weighing about a ton, was tied with a rope around its tail and had two wounds in the back. The villagers claimed that the *butanding* was trapped in a fine fish net at about 2 p.m. on Nov. 2. But they said they had to bring it ashore on orders of Mayor Gerry Triguero to show to the world that like Donsol in neighboring Sorsogon province, the country's *butanding* capital, their town has also whale sharks. Triguero said he would like the *butanding* to boost tourism in Pioduran as what it did phenomenally in Donsol.

Foul

However, the Bicol Scuba Divers Foundation Inc. (BSDFI), cried foul and criticized Triguero and the villagers for holding on to their captive.

The group, along with other concerned environmentalists, bewailed the mayor's enthusiastic invitation on Nov. 3 over local radio station dzGB-AM for the public to see the *butanding* as proof that the world's biggest fish can also be found in his place.

Ramon P. Tomas, BSDFI president, said the action of the mayor and the villagers could endanger the life of the wounded whale shark.

"Just imagine some residents riding on top of the whale shark without even considering the stress they could induce? Plus the use of rope, which certainly could have inflicted undue harm on the *butanding*," he said.

In a resolution, the BSDFI requested the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to punish those responsible for the maltreatment with penalties prescribed in the Fisheries Administrative



CURIOUS residents of Barangay Basicao in Pioduran, Albay surround the wounded whale shark.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Order (FAO). It also cited Sections 65 and 107 of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 banning the taking, catching or even possessing of whale sharks.

Tomas stressed the need for the government agency's decisive action as it might become a precedent.

BFAR regional director Jaime dela Vega said the Pioduran residents did not have to prove the presence of *butanding* in their place. Pilar and Donsol towns in Sorsogon and Pioduran in Albay have been a highway and migratory park for *butanding*, he said.

He also saw the need to strengthen the bureau's programs although earlier, he

said that his office had actually saturated the entire Region with information as part of its campaign on how to treat the *butanding*.

Intentional

Nini Ravanilla, tourism regional director, has also joined the chorus of critics. "The *butanding* was tied by its tail and was brought to the shore, prompting the villagers to make fun of the whale shark," she noted.

Triguero is ignorant of the law, she said. She stressed that based on the footage taken by ABS-CBN that she had seen, Triguero deliberately violated FAO No. 193.

Ravanilla said she strongly believed that the *butanding* was not accidentally trapped but was caught by fishermen. The whale shark season, from May to December, is here, she said.

Steve dela Punta, chair of Barangay Basicao, denied the tourism official's allegation.

"Because of the friendly treatment of the fishermen and the practice of proper fishing, the sea continuously produces *balaw* or the smallest shrimp, which serves as the *butanding's* food," he said.

Basicao, compared to other coastal villages, has clean water surface and is only 6 kilometers from the town

proper, he said. Because the water surface is clean, four to six whale sharks appear in Basicao year round, he said.

Abundant

Many whale sharks have been found along the coastline of Pioduran even before they appeared in Donsol, Triguero claimed.

When he learned that the creatures were harmless, the mayor said, he called the attention of the fishermen and asked them to take care of the *butanding* if they had a chance to see one.

Rogelio Huab, a fisherman, said that during the *butanding* season, he could easily harvest five to six *bañeras* (tubs) of *balaw* from 5 a.m. to 4 p.m. He sells a *bañera* for P125.

With the good harvest and the presence of the *butanding*, 80 percent of the 3,500 families, mostly fishermen, were able to improve their lives. Their houses, which used to be made of nipa, now have concrete materials. They were able to send their children to schools in Legazpi City.

Progress

"If the *butanding* will not leave the Basicao coast, progress will be experienced by the villagers," Dela Punta said.

Many people will benefit if the provincial government can only give attention to the existence of *butanding* in their town and develop it into a tourist destination, he said.

Board member Gigi Manzanilla, tourism committee chair, said the Basicao coast has a great potential to become draw tourists.

Before the area is developed, however, the villagers should be educated on how to take care of the whale sharks and the proper way to entertain visitors, she said.

Instead of holding a *butanding* festival like in Donsol, Basicao could celebrate the *balaw* festival, she said.

The villagers finally freed the *butanding* after two days even without being tagged by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Sa Nov. 22
na ang
lunch date
natin!

VENUE:

CAP - JOHN HAY
CONVENTION CENTER,
BAGUIO CITY

TIME:

11:00AM

Wag mong
kakalimutan ha!

May mga sorpresa
ako sayo!

The legacy of Kuya Joe

By Roly Embile
Tabaco City

ICAN hardly recall a more depressing and humiliating experience in my life as a journalist than when an irate deskperson crumpled the copies I had submitted and dumped it in a trash bin. That was my first attempt at getting my first feature article published.

Overhearing our heated exchange over it, Joe Burgos Jr., my editor at the Bicol Forum (BF) back in 1985 in Tabaco City in Albay, had me retrieve the crumpled pages from the bin, read them briefly, then told me to report back the next day. I was then a reporter-photographer for the regional English weekly, which was published by Burgos himself.

I could not be happier when I not only had my first byline but a whole tabloid-size page dedicated to my article.

A year and a half later, I was made editor of the weekly and finally given the singular privilege of pounding on his extra-large-type Underwood.

Without so many words said, this scene and many others that had come afterwards were eloquent demonstrations of Burgos' talent and dedication in discovering and molding a new generation of equally talented and dedicated journalists.

Big brother

Other than his journalistic persona, there is, to me, the more interesting and endearing side of Joe Burgos—his "Kuya Joe" facet.

I believe that it was his big brother image and sense of responsibility that egged me on to persevere in a profession that never promised money, or fame, from my humble beginning as a provincial journalist.

Among a dozen wide-eyed young Bicolano recruits for the Bicol Forum by Burgos, who in 1985 was among the bigger-than-life personalities opposing the excesses of the Marcos regime, I was awed but at the same time a little disappointed because the Joe Burgos I faced, was mild-mannered and soft-spoken, contrary to the militant rebel-type I expected.

In the devastating aftermath of super typhoon "Sisang" in late 1986, when most of Bicol remained without electricity, I wrote, edited and laid out what was to be the last issue of the BF in a makeshift bench lighted by a kerosene lamp before it finally folded.

Burgos then offered me to work in Manila for the WE Forum and its sister publications, Masa and MetroMail, where most of the workers were but a team of volunteers. Unlike in other media



BURGOS: Passion for life and land.
PHOTO BY VICENTE CARREON

outfit and networks, we did not talk about wages, workers' benefits and, much less, bonuses.

We had no agreed salary but simply made "vale" (cash advances) every now and then, and there was no complaining. Some of us were given free board and lodging at the Burgos residence on Tandang Sora Avenue, Quezon City.

We were simply there for Kuya Joe and what he stood for and shared what there was to share—like meals of sardines and hot *pandesal* during hard times, and beer and Andok's *lechon manok* in better times.

Unique education

Best of all was the unique experience of working so hard for virtually nothing in return.

During the next three years, Burgos put me through a truly unique on-the-job education of going through all the phases of newspaper production.

Other than the editorial chores that included stints at the photo library, research, column and editorial writing, I was made to work as a printing assistant, circulation assistant and negative stripper.

On the streets, I had my fill of tear gas in my eyes, mouth and nose, and the stinging feel of an occasional wayward police truncheon, or some dripping experience from water cannons all taken matter-of-factly as part of the job that had to be done.

These things are but the better recollections than the easier part of the job of covering entertainment, business, or political personalities and events.

Later on, however, I would realize that they were the stuff that truly toughened me when I landed various jobs in radio broadcasting, other publication outfits, teaching and community organizing, including

THE LEGACY/A19

Thieves prey on corpse, steal cash

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Thieves did not spare one of the 15 fatalities in a vehicular accident Saturday in Silay City, Negros Occidental.

Sandra Lucasio was robbed of her cash and three rings worth about P125,000 while her body was at the Memorial Hospital on Saturday.

Silay police arrested suspects Rommel Aposaga, 30, and Ireneo Mina, 31, both utility workers of the hospital in Silay City, about 14 kilometers north of this city.

Supt. Celestino Guara, Silay police chief, said about P30,000 in cash was recovered from Aposaga and P10,000 from Mina.

Aposaga admitted to police that he took the three rings and two bundles of P500 bills from the pockets of Lucasio who was mistakenly identified earlier by the police as Melanie Cumapas.

Aposaga said he told security guard Ronald Gamelong about the money but Gamelong reportedly told him to keep it in the meantime and return it only when somebody looked for it.

Police said Gamelong failed to record in the hospital logbook the cash and valuables taken by Aposaga from the corpse of Lucasio, of which P10,000 in P500 bills was shared with Mina.

Guara said they came to know about the missing money when Zhucksy Lucasio, 23, the victim's daughter, informed them about it.

Lucasio said her mother had P185,000 in cash in her possession, which would be used to pay for scrap iron and workers' salaries in Bais City, Negros Oriental.

She said P50,000 was in the bag of her mother, which was recovered intact, and the P125,000 was placed in the two pockets of her mother's pants.



WATCHFUL EYES

A US Marine keeps a tight watch around a mosque site in Talungkasay, Zamboanga where US troops recently conducted a medical mission in a bid to win hearts and minds as they train Filipino troops on antiterror tactics.

The legacy of Kuya Joe

From page A18

provincial press associations.

Sometimes in hindsight, I feel sorry that I came rather at a time when half of Kuya Joe's battle had been won. Like I missed the opportunity of having stood by him and many others who during the dark period of Marcos' martial rule felt the terror and deprivation of their rights and freedom and life in jails and safe houses as the crowning moment of such education.

A lot more can be said of Kuya Joe, including his sense of humor.

Faced with the difficulty of standing up to the taunts and bullying tactics of some military and police officials as a cub reporter, I confided to Kuya Joe and sought his advice.

"Huwag kang matatakot dahil ikaw ay mukhang duwag lang pero buo ang loob, di tulad nila na nagtitigas-tigas lang pero duwag naman talaga. Pero pag me baril at mukhang desidido, atras ka dahil mahirap na (Never fear because you might look yellow on the outside but inside you are really tough not like them who merely bluff to hide their cowardice. But if they have guns and are likely to use them on you, you better run for your life)," he said.

Tilling the land

Kuya Joe's love and passion for the land and the life it sustains were not in anyway brought on by accident.

When I started to work for him, he had invariably mentioned in his columns and in casual conversations that the Bicolanos, for example, need not be poor, and that in their fertile land lies the answers to their basic problems.

"Mayon Volcano has so enriched the land in Albay that if one plants his fingers in the soil, in no time they will grow some roots," he wrote in a column.

He observed that the same could be true in his hometown of Ilocos Sur if only the people there could be free of their dependence on a single cash crop, which is tobacco.

A few years before even investing in his farm in San Miguel, Bulacan, he made sure that he knew

what he was doing and he was prepared to share the experience with the rest of humanity.

I was with him in many trips to the University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna and several parts of Southern Tagalog and in various agriculture forums in Metro Manila and elsewhere, as well as in laying the foundation of his now-famous integrated farm.

"Tandaan mo ito, Roly, balang araw, gagayahin mo ito dahil pagkatapos ng lahat nasa lupa ang tunay na buhay," he said as an advice, which even then I did not take lightly.

The words did rub thoroughly well on me, which explains my new found joy in gardening and telling friends and many others about it.

Passionate energy

While I was not surprised at this otherwise unexpected shift in his life from a consummate journalist to a hands-on farmer, I was nevertheless awed by his passionate energy for sharing his experiences.

His failing health did not reflect on his unbounded enthusiasm in another facet of journalism dedicated to agriculture, in the books and articles he authored, the newspaper columns he diligently wrote, the radio programs he did, the forums he lectured on, or in the various regions in the country he visited, accompanied only by his wife Edith, organizing and urging provincial journalists to dedicate their effort, if only partly, to agriculture reporting.

The last serious talk I had with him was during a lunch conference with some Bicolano journalists in Legazpi City where he and his wife drove from Manila in a borrowed car. The conference was all about propagating agriculture reporting.

That is the Joe Burgos Jr. I know and learned to admire as a boss, friend and professional colleague—staying true to form and character until the very last moment.

His heroic deeds as a champion of press freedom of the century had certainly made him larger-than-life.

And in his departing, the many people he had genuinely touched with his sincere kindness and understanding, are indeed proud to be the bearers of his legacy.

Mangrove trees cut for Xmas

MATI, Davao Oriental—As the Christmas season is fast approaching, some residents along the coastal barangays of the protected Pujada Bay here have started cutting mangrove trees to turn them into Christmas trees.

Such practice has alarmed David Pajarillaga, Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer here, who called on the local media to help reach out to the residents of the coastal villages of Pujada Bay.

"We need the help of the local media especially radio stations in telling the residents of the coastal villages of Pujada Bay that the massive cutting of mangrove trees to be sold as Christmas trees is a criminal offense and that they might be imprisoned for that," he said.

"We are destroying the habitat of fishes because mangrove trees serve as their sanctuary," he added.

Fisherman Filomino Mataping, 64, who sells mangrove trees for Christmas trees said he was unaware that cutting mangrove trees is illegal.

"I have been doing this (cutting and selling mangrove trees) for almost 10 years now but no one stopped us. I never thought that there was already a law that prohibits us from cutting the mangrove trees," he said.

Mataping sells cut mangrove trees, which measures at least four feet, at P20 each.

Mataping said many people prefer mangrove trees "because it is very cheap compared to the ones being sold at the depart-

ment stores."

A 4-foot tall Christmas tree is sold at department stores here at P300 to P350 each.

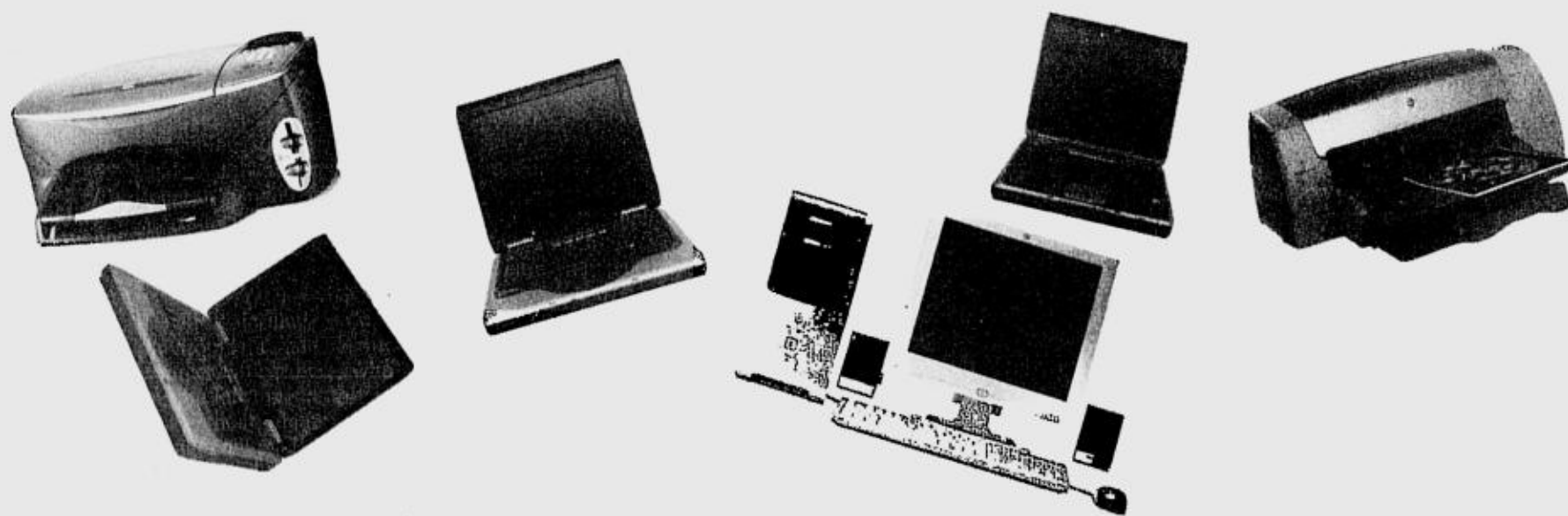
Pajarillaga also criticized teachers of public elementary schools for requiring their students to bring mangrove trees to be used as Christmas trees.

"It is very unfortunate because they (teachers) are supposed to be the ones who should teach the children to love trees. Cutting mangrove trees is an ecologically destructive practice, I want them to know that," he said.

Pajarillaga said under illegally cutting mangrove trees has a penalty of six months imprisonment.

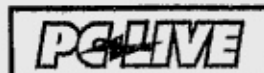
Some residents also cut mangrove trees to sell them as firewood or charcoal. **Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

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DOTC SECRETARY LEANDRO MENDOZA ACTED SWIFTLY ON AIRPORT INCIDENT

WE support Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza over his handling of the takeover of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport control tower before dawn last Saturday, Nov. 8, 2003, by two armed men.

The siege and the unfortunate death of former Air Transportation Office Chief Panfilo Villaruel and his aide, Navy Lt. Ricardo Catchillar, who took over the control tower for three hours, was justified under the circumstances.

Mendoza had taken the right measures in dealing with the situation. Before the early morning flights came in, the situation at the control tower had been resolved and normal operations had resumed. Airplane passengers and crew have, therefore, been spared from a real danger to their lives.

Therefore, there is no justification to calls for Secretary Mendoza's resignation on alleged grounds of "serious security breach." Mendoza had, in fact, acted swiftly to end the standoff which if prolonged would have risked the lives of many innocent persons.

Remember, the situation did not involve persons who could be called security risks. The event was unfortunate but it could not have been foreseen. Villaruel was a former chief of the Air Transportation Office, from 1993 to 1996, and had access to areas within the airport because he was conducting a research. Both the security personnel and people working in the control tower knew him personally.

When Villaruel and Catchillar took over the airport control tower, which was very unfortunate, their action had no justification whatsoever even if they had grievances to express. They were risking the lives of passengers and crew of aircraft being guided by the airport facility. Mendoza had to act swiftly because in a few hours from the takeover of the control tower, takeoff and landing operations of aircraft for the day were about to start. The airport control tower guides the arrival of some 70 flights a day which carry about 40,000 passengers. There was so much at stake if the standoff continued.

Villaruel and Catchillar had to be neutralized and the airport control tower had to resume normal operations. Negotiations were conducted to resolve the issue without bloodshed, but during the conversations with Villaruel, the latter was adamant and refused to surrender. Villaruel said he and his companion were prepared to die and that they had, in fact, explosives with them.

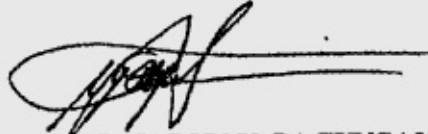
The airport control tower incident could not be compared to the Oakwood hotel takeover by junior military officers and their men last July 27 where no shots were fired and no lives lost. Unlike In the Oakwood incident where the mutinous soldiers could have stayed for days on end at the premier hotel without risking lives, the airport incident was dangerous because it would have threatened the lives of plane passengers if the situation continued.

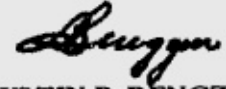
The measures taken to neutralize Villaruel and Catchillar were, thus, appropriate to the circumstances at hand. There was no "overkill" as some sectors are charging. The steps taken were just right for the situation.

We, therefore, disagree with calls for the resignation of Secretary Mendoza.

Mendoza should instead be commended for his swift action on the incident, which if allowed to drag on, would have adverse repercussions to our country's image in the international community.

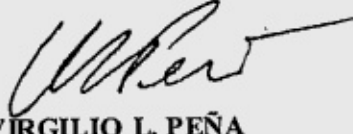
The men and women in uniform, both in the police and in the military, who responded to the call to resolve this incident should also be commended for putting their lives on the line in order to ensure the safety of all those affected by this incident.

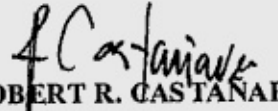

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Undersecretary for Staff Services
Air Transportation


AGUSTIN R. BENGZON
Undersecretary
Water Transportation

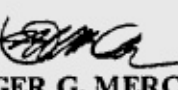

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Undersecretary
Rail Transportation


ARTURO T. VALDEZ
Undersecretary
Land Transportation


VIRGILIO L. PEÑA
Undersecretary
Communications Sector

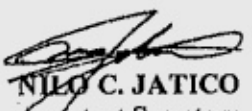

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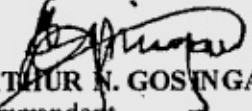

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ROGER G. MERCADO
Assistant Secretary
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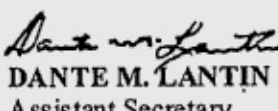

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Land Transportation Office


CECILIA V. REYES
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Information Technology

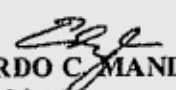

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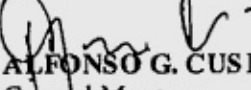

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Commandant
Philippine Coast Guard


ROBERTO T. LASTIMOSO
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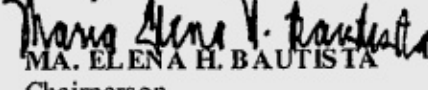

DANTE M. LANTIN
Assistant Secretary
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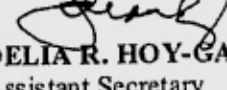

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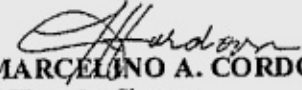

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General Manager
Manila International Airport Authority

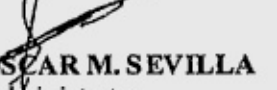

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General Manager
Philippine Ports Authority

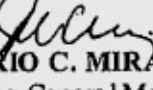

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Light Rail Transit Authority

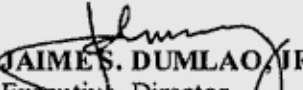

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Land Transportation Franchising and
Regulatory Board

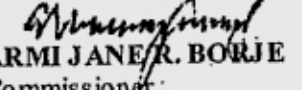

DELIA R. HOY-GANADEN
Assistant Secretary
Telecommunications Office

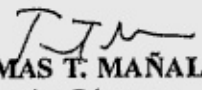

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Officer-In-Charge
Mactan Cebu Int'l Airport Authority

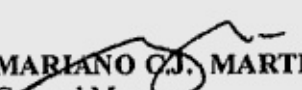

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Maritime Industry Authority

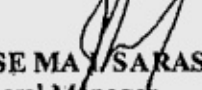

MARIO C. MIRANDA
Acting General Manager
Metro Rail Transit 3

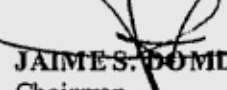

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Executive Director
Toll Regulatory Board

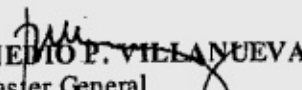

ARMI JANER R. BORJE
Commissioner
National Telecommunications
Commission


TOMAS T. MAÑALAC
Executive Director
Civil Aeronautics Board

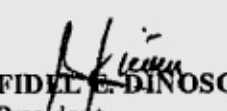

MARIANO G. MARTINEZ
General Manager
Cebu Ports Authority


JOSE MA. SARASOLA II
General Manager
Philippine National Railways


JAMES S. BANDOM
Chairman
Office of Transport Cooperatives


DIOMEDIO P. VILLANUEVA
Postmaster General
Philippine Postal Corporation


REYNATO R. JOSE
President
Phil. Aeronautics Development Corp.


FIDEL E. DINOSA
President
Phil. Merchant Marine Academy

Autumn comes. It always does.

Goodbye comes. It always does....

And so I begin my fallow vigil,

Remembering the truth of the ages:

Unless the wheat seed dies

It cannot sing a new birth.

Unless summer gives in to autumn

Springtime will never embrace me.

(Author unknown)

The family of the late
TAN CHUA KING HA

*thanks you, our friends,
for your generous gestures
of kindness and care
in our time of sorrow.*

Her bereaved and devoted children and spouses,

Lucio and Carmen

Sencio and Lay Ming

Mariano and Aleta

Harry and Cindy

Frank and Winnie

Shirley and Domingo

Sally and Chi Ming

Erap torn between ma, operation

From page A1

nal aneurysms, "any one of which could end her life within minutes." Her favorite son, the ex-president now facing plunder and graft charges, was last allowed to visit on Oct. 26.

'Never mind'

Asked yet again whether Malacañang had offered a deal for him to make the US trip in exchange for his support of President Macapagal-Arroyo's reelection bid, Estrada said: "Never mind politics. Never mind the election. I have only one mother."

And if it's the Sandiganbayan that grants his bid? "I will think it over hard," he said.

Malacañang yesterday reiterated that "the determination of medical necessity" in Estrada's case was the "exclusive prerogative of the Sandiganbayan availing of its resources."

But Ms Macapagal assured her jailed predecessor that he could return to the country after his treatment abroad, should the Sandi-

gan give him permission.

"The former President will continue to enjoy all the rights that the law entitles him to, subject to the parameters set by the court. This includes the right to come home if he is ever allowed to go abroad," said Ignacio Bunye, presidential spokesperson.

Not interfering

But Bunye stressed that Ms Macapagal was "not speculating on the court's position and we are not interfering with it."

Housing Secretary Mike Defensor, Malacañang's emissary to the Estrada camp, earlier said the detained ex-president had sought a government guarantee that he would not be barred from returning.

In a radio interview yesterday, Ms Macapagal refused to comment further on Estrada's situation. "Bunye and (deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo) Saludo are my spokesmen," she said.

Bunye appealed to the President's critics to

not relate her "conciliatory gesture" to the 2004 elections.

Biblical precedent

On Nov. 16, the INQUIRER quoted Defensor as saying that Ms Macapagal "for humanitarian reasons... would be amenable to Estrada's being allowed to undergo knee surgery in the US."

"Everyone is entitled to express sincere compassion and no one should read politics or judicial interference into it," Bunye said. "The President has expressed her personal view on this issue based on her policy of unity and reconciliation, which is a matter of public interest."

In the dzRH interview, Ms Macapagal asserted that principled reconciliation required an acknowledgment of the offense committed, restitution, and a promise not to commit the offense again.

The President said the biblical story of Zaccheus was the perfect illustration of reconciliation. Jesus Christ himself "forgave and honored" the tax collector who had "skeletons in his closet," she said, after he vowed to give half of his wealth to the poor and return to them four times of what he had stolen.

Suspected endgame: Pardon

Private prosecutors helping to secure Estrada's conviction, thus, found reason to suspect that Malacañang's endgame could be pardon for the ousted President.

"The stage is being set for this President or another to grant Estrada pardon," lawyer Leonard de Vera said in a news briefing yesterday.

De Vera outlined the scenario that, he said, Malacañang was apparently setting:

Constitutional requirement for pardon is for Estrada to be convicted and not appeal the ruling before the Supreme Court.

While abroad, Estrada could refuse to return, repeating claims that he cannot hope to get justice from Sandigan or the high tribunal.

Unable to testify and present evidence in his defense, Estrada is likely to get a conviction, "thus removing legal obstacles for the sitting president to grant him pardon" in the name of unity and reconciliation.

Estrada could be pardoned, whether he asked for it or not, the lawyer said.

Rule of law

In a statement the private prosecutors also said: "The issue is neither Estrada's right to life, nor his right to obtain medical treatment. The issue... is the rule of law versus a claim of special privilege." They agreed that Estrada needed medical treatment, but maintained "it should be done here in the Philippines."

The lawyers and the Plunder Watch citizens' group appealed to the anti-graft court not to be swayed by Ms Macapagal's "interference."

Plunder Watch said Estrada's lawyers had not presented "new compelling reasons" for the court to reconsider its earlier denial of foreign medical treatment. The group noted that the patient had received permission for a variety of local treatments, including a visit to a religious center to be doused with "healing waters."

To walk out

In the same briefing, government prosecutors threatened to "walk out" if the Sandigan allowed Estrada to go abroad.

"There (would be) no sense in continuing with the prosecution," said lawyer Arno Sanidad.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said he would also pack up if he no longer felt "comfortable" handling the case. He warned that letting Estrada go could set a bad precedent, where "any accused (person) with money can leave jail and go abroad."

With a report from AP



OUSTED President Estrada tends to his ailing 98-year-old mother during a visit to her house in San Juan on Oct. 26, 2003.

REUTERS

Hair-Raising
Ad Costs?
Advertise
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PRIVATE lawyers Ricardo Nepomuceno and Leonardo de Vera hold a press conference to voice opposition to a proposal to allow former President Estrada to have his knee operation in the United States. JOAN BONDOC

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METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Meisic Cuartel going down in history

By Tarra Quismundo

MANILA will soon be losing one more part of its past.

Despite the clamor for it to be preserved, the remaining walls of the Meisic Cuartel in Binondo will be torn down to give way to a mall.

The Cuartel, or Cuartel de Caballeria, was built in the 1700s and became the headquarters of the city's first law enforcers during the 1800s.

During the American occupation, it served as the barracks of American soldiers, then as a garrison of Japanese soldiers. It was also once a tobacco factory.

"We have asked them [city government] to revise the design of the commercial building to show the

features of the old Meisic Cuartel," said Reynaldo Inovero, chief of the National Historic Institute's preservation division.

Inovero, an architect, however, admitted that the remaining walls were hard to preserve since these were already fragile, and were not strong enough to hold the rest of the planned multi-level commercial structure.

What remains of the historic site are the walls of the Western Police District Station 11.

The architect explained that the NHI had initially wanted to preserve the remaining walls of the historic cuartel, "but the authenticity was less than 50 percent."

He said the remaining walls,

which are made of huge adobe stones, had been refurbished, repainted, and even cemented over.

The city, which owns the land on which the Cuartel stands, will be leasing 4,000 square meters of the Meisic land to property developer Bullion Development, which has tapped Federal Builders Inc. to build the mall.

Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. said Bullion would be paying a minimal fee for leasing the land and would be building an annex of City Hall at no expense to the city government.

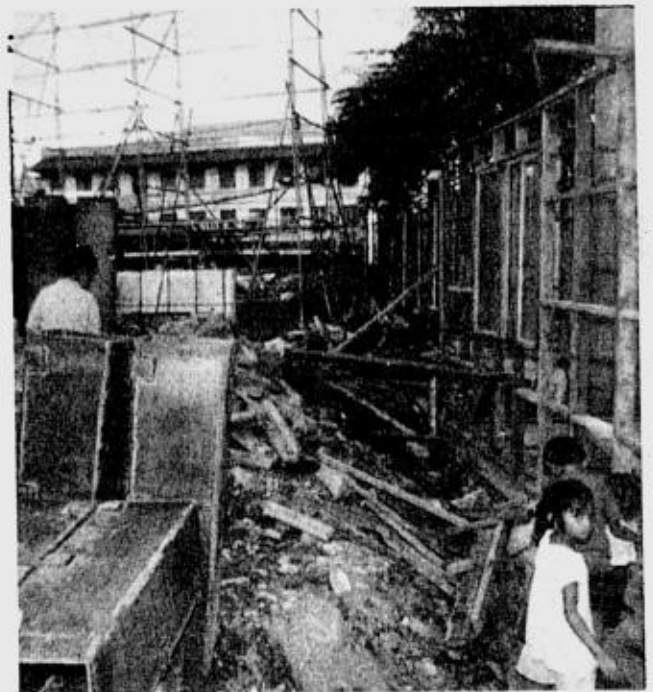
The City Hall annex will house a police station, a health center, and a permits office, according to Atienza. Aside from getting a share of the

fees that will be charged for renting out shop spaces, City Hall will get full ownership of the mall building after 25 years.

Atienza downplayed the historical value of the present structure saying it was only built in the 1970s, as the old building was destroyed during the second world war.

But NHI's Lorelei de Viana, who wrote a book on Binondo's surviving centuries-old structures, said the remaining walls were "definitely centuries old."

Inovero said the adobe blocks of the old walls will be "carefully taken apart" and displayed in a gallery at the mall to be dedicated to the Cuartel. A replica and photos of the Cuartel will be placed in the gallery.



DEMOLISHED part of the old police building. RUDY ESPERAS



RECENTLY cleared of squatters, the UP Arboretum draws nearer to settling questions on its ownership. JOAN BONDOUC

High court foils land grab on Arboretum

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court has shot down what it called another "crass attempt" to grab land from the University of the Philippines in its campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

In a 24-page decision, the SC First Division upheld the state university's ownership of 77.9 hectares of land in Culiat, Quezon City, against the claim of Jorge Chin and Renato Mallari.

The land largely forms the Arboretum, the last remaining rain forest in Metro Manila.

"The case at bar is another crass attempt to grab part of the Diliman campus of the University of the Philippines. Over and over again, this Court has ruled that the title of UP over its Diliman campus is indefeasible and beyond dispute. We cannot deviate from this ruling," said the ruling penned by Associate Justice Reynato Puno.

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez concurred with Puno while

Justices Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Adolfo Azcuna dissented.

Santiago and Azcuna said that UP's ownership of the land was not supported by "clear, competent, and substantive evidence."

The case began after Chin and Mallari squabbled in court with one Maria Destura over the ownership of the land.

On Feb. 10, 2000, the SC affirmed the ownership of Chin and Mallari of the property under Transfer Certificates of Title (TCT) Nos. 5298 and 52929.

The state university filed a motion for intervention, pointing out that the contested property actually formed part of its Diliman campus.

UP claimed ownership over the land under TCT No. 9462.

"Needless to say," the SC First Division said, "Chin and Mallari are precluded from claiming ownership of the land in dispute as the issue of ownership by UP has long been settled in numerous decisions."

From page A24

But Atienza already said that declaring Tondo a calamity area would be too late, and might only cause panic among residents.

The delay in the passage of a resolution placing the areas under a state of calamity was due to the consistent lack of quorum at the Council since Nov. 11, when sessions should have resumed after the Nov. 1 and 2 break.

But Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna said in an interview that the resolution was needed to make any disbursement from the calamity fund legal.

Second District Councilor Marlon Lacson, who authored the resolution, said Tondo would remain a calamity area "until the situation has been resolved."

To date, more than 800 residents in Tondo have reportedly contracted acute gastroenteritis.

There have been eight confirmed deaths, all caused by severe dehydration.

The outbreak began on Oct. 23, with a second wave arising on Oct. 31. Since then, city health officials have noted a downtrend in the number of reported cases.

20 WPD station chiefs reshuffled

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE EXPECTED reshuffle at the Western Police District has taken effect.

Twenty WPD officials were yesterday appointed to their new designations in turnover ceremonies attended by district director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Nine of the 11 police station commanders in Manila were replaced, although some of the newly appointed officials used to head other police stations as well.

Appointed to head the Balut, Tondo post, or Station 1, is Supt. Danilo Estapon, while his predecessor, Sr. Supt. Danilo Abarsoza, was appointed to Station 2 or the Moriones, Tondo police station.

Former intelligence unit chief Supt. Romulo Sapitula was designated Station 3, or Central Market, commander. Supt. Elmer Jamias, former Station 2 commander, was transferred to the Ermita post or Station 5.

Jamias' predecessor, Supt. Araceli Hofleña, was appointed to the Sta. Ana police station, or

Station 6. Supt. Rodolfo Llorca, was designated as the new commander of Station 7 or the Jose Abad Santos post. Appointed commander of Station 8 or the Sta. Mesa police station was Supt. Efrén Perez.

Supt. George Gaddi was designated as the new head of Station 9, or the Malate police station. His predecessor, Supt. Bernardo Diaz, was appointed as the new commander of Station 11 or the Meisic police station.

Not moved to new posts were Station 4 commander Supt. Manolo Martinez and recently-appointed Station 10 commander Supt. Roberto dela Rosa.

Meanwhile, designated as the new chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit was Supt. Co Yee Co Jr., former commander of Station 8. Appointed as his deputy was former station 6 commander Supt. Clifton Empiso.

Another former station commander, Supt. Frumonto Villareal who used to head the Meisic police station, was named the new chief of the special reaction unit.

Former station 7 commander Supt. Hospicio Guevarra was appointed chief of the district's legal unit. Former Station 3 commander Supt. Antonio Sebastian was appointed head of the human resources department.

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With his wealth of experience as a judge, plus his unblemished reputation and master's degree in law, he will be an asset to the Court of Appeals or the Sandiganbayan.

His promotion is awaited not only by practicing lawyers but also by laymen, who have had the fortune of listening to his intelligent discourse.

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METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Meisic Cuartel going down in history

By Tarra Quismundo

MANILA will soon be losing one more part of its past.

Despite the clamor for it to be preserved, the remaining walls of the Meisic Cuartel in Binondo will be torn down to give way to a mall.

The Cuartel, or Cuartel de Caballeria, was built in the 1700s and became the headquarters of the city's first law enforcers during the 1800s.

During the American occupation, it served as the barracks of American soldiers, then as a garrison of Japanese soldiers. It was also once a tobacco factory.

"We have asked them [city government] to revise the design of the commercial building to show the

features of the old Meisic Cuartel," said Reynaldo Inovero, chief of the National Historic Institute's preservation division.

Inovero, an architect, however, admitted that the remaining walls were hard to preserve since these were already fragile, and were not strong enough to hold the rest of the planned multi-level commercial structure.

What remains of the historic site are the walls of the Western Police District Station 11.

The architect explained that the NHI had initially wanted to preserve the remaining walls of the historic cuartel, "but the authenticity was less than 50 percent."

He said the remaining walls,

which are made of huge adobe stones, had been refurbished, repainted, and even cemented over.

The city, which owns the land on which the Cuartel stands, will be leasing 4,000 square meters of the Meisic land to property developer Bullion Development, which has tapped Federal Builders Inc. to build the mall.

Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. said Bullion would be paying a minimal fee for leasing the land and would be building an annex of City Hall at no expense to the city government.

The City Hall annex will house a police station, a health center, and a permits office, according to Atienza.

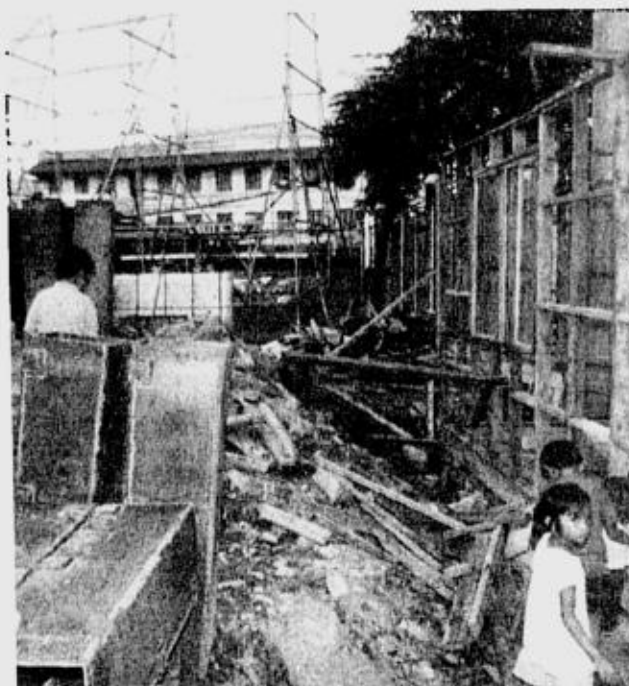
Aside from getting a share of the

fees that will be charged for renting out shop spaces, City Hall will get full ownership of the mall building after 25 years.

Atienza downplayed the historical value of the present structure saying it was only built in the 1970s, as the old building was destroyed during the second world war.

But NHI's Lorelei de Viana, who wrote a book on Binondo's surviving centuries-old structures, said the remaining walls were "definitely centuries old."

Inovero said the adobe blocks of the old walls will be "carefully taken apart" and displayed in a gallery at the mall to be dedicated to the Cuartel. A replica and photos of the Cuartel will be placed in the gallery.



DEMOLISHED part of the old police building. RUDY ESPERAS



RECENTLY cleared of squatters, the UP Arboretum draws nearer to settling questions on its ownership. JOAN BONDOC

High court foils land grab on Arboretum

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court has shot down what it called another "crass attempt" to grab land from the University of the Philippines in its campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

In a 24-page decision, the SC First Division upheld the state university's ownership of 77.9 hectares of land in Culiati, Quezon City, against the claim of Jorge Chin and Renato Mallari.

The land largely forms the Arboretum, the last remaining rain forest in Metro Manila.

"The case at bar is another crass attempt to grab part of the Diliman campus of the University of the Philippines. Over and over again, this Court has ruled that the title of UP over its Diliman campus is indefeasible and beyond dispute. We cannot deviate from this ruling," said the ruling penned by Associate Justice Reynato Puno.

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez concurred with Puno while

Justices Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Adolfo Azcuna dissented.

Santiago and Azcuna said that UP's ownership of the land was not supported by "clear, competent, and substantive evidence."

The case began after Chin and Mallari squabbled in court with one Maria Destura over the ownership of the land.

On Feb. 10, 2000, the SC affirmed the ownership of Chin and Mallari of the property under Transfer Certificates of Title (TCT) Nos. 5298 and 52929.

The state university filed a motion for intervention, pointing out that the contested property actually formed part of its Diliman campus.

UP claimed ownership over the land under TCT No. 9462.

"Needless to say," the SC First Division said, "Chin and Mallari are precluded from claiming ownership of the land in dispute as the issue of ownership by UP has long been settled in numerous decisions."

From page A24

But Atienza already said that declaring Tondo a calamity area would be too late, and might only cause panic among residents.

The delay in the passage of a resolution placing the areas under a state of calamity was due to the consistent lack of quorum at the Council since Nov. 11, when sessions should have resumed after the Nov. 1 and 2 break.

But Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna said in an interview that the resolution was needed to make any disbursement from the calamity fund legal.

Second District Councilor Marlon Lacson, who authored the resolution, said Tondo would remain a calamity area "until the situation has been resolved."

To date, more than 800 residents in Tondo has reportedly contracted acute gastroenteritis.

There have been eight confirmed deaths, all caused by severe dehydration.

The outbreak began on Oct. 23, with a second wave arising on Oct. 31. Since then, city health officials have noted a downtrend in the number of reported cases.

20 WPD station chiefs reshuffled

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE EXPECTED reshuffle at the Western Police District has taken effect.

Twenty WPD officials were yesterday appointed to their new designations in turnover ceremonies attended by district director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Nine of the 11 police station commanders in Manila were replaced, although some of the newly appointed officials used to head other police stations as well.

Appointed to head the Balut, Tondo post, or Station 1, is Supt. Danilo Estapon, while his predecessor, Sr. Supt. Danilo Abarsoza, was appointed to Station 2 or the Moriones, Tondo police station.

Former intelligence unit chief Supt. Romulo Sapitula was designated Station 3, or Central Market, commander. Supt. Elmer Jamias, former Station 2 commander, was transferred to the Ermita post or Station 5.

Jamias' predecessor, Supt. Araceli Hofleña, was appointed to the Sta. Ana police station, or

Station 6. Supt. Rodolfo Llorca, was designated as the new commander of Station 7 or the Jose Abad Santos post. Appointed commander of Station 8 or the Sta. Mesa police station was Supt. Efren Perez.

Supt. George Gaddi was designated as the new head of Station 9, or the Malate police station. His predecessor, Supt. Bernardo Diaz, was appointed as the new commander of Station 11 or the Meisic police station.

Not moved to new posts were Station 4 commander Supt. Manolo Martinez and recently-appointed Station 10 commander Supt. Roberto dela Rosa.

Meanwhile, designated as the new chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit was Supt. Co Yee Co Jr., former commander of Station 8. Appointed as his deputy was former station 6 commander Supt. Clifton Empiso.

Another former station commander, Supt. Frumonto Villareal who used to head the Meisic police station, was named the new chief of the special reaction unit.

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EVEREADY

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

On October 3, 2003, six teams from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) swooped down on separate establishments in Manila suspected of distributing Size "AA" Batteries infringing on the EVEREADY™ Cat and 9™ trademarks. At 7:00 p.m., the CIDG operatives served search warrants on 1) warehouse allegedly owned or operated by one Johnson Chan, located in Binondo, and 2) warehouse stockrooms allegedly owned or operated by one Tony Chua, in Tondo, all in Manila City. The CIDG also served search warrants on two establishments, namely WORLD OF ACCESSORIES in Tondo, and FASHION GEAR BAZAAR in San Nicolas, Manila. The foregoing strike was followed by mopping up operations on October 8, 2003, where the CIDG seized batteries infringing on the Eveready™ and CAT and 9™ marks from ECOSAN BAZAAR (in Binondo), FUNDIDOR GENERAL MERCHANDISE (in Binondo), HONEST TO GOODNESS TRADING (in Binondo), and CODENAME GENERAL MERCHANDISE (in San Nicolas) all in the City of Manila.

All told, CIDG operatives seized approximately 500,000 pieces of infringing batteries. Energizer Philippines, Inc. is now preparing the necessary criminal and civil complaint-charges against the said establishments. If convicted, the parties may be subject to penalties of up to five (5) years imprisonment plus fine.

Energizer Philippines, Inc. hereby warns all other establishments selling or distributing products infringing the Eveready™ trademark and Cat and 9™ design that it will not hesitate to bear down the full weight of the law on any party, individual or establishment engaged in the traffic of fake products.

PLATON MARTINEZ FLORES
SAN PEDRO & LEAÑO
Counsel for Energizer Philippines, Inc.
6/F Tuscan Bldg.,
114 Herrera Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City



Tondo declared calamity area

By Tarra Quismundo

AFTER local health officials declared a recent gastroenteritis outbreak in Tondo as having ended, the Manila City Council put two districts in the area under a

state of calamity.

The Council declared Manila's 1st and 2nd Districts as calamity areas during its session Tuesday. The action gives Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. the power to disburse part of more than P233

million in calamity funds for the affected areas.

The resolution also applies to Barangays 412 and 413 in Sampaloc, which were recently hit by fire and affected some 90 families.

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Gloria okays P111-M SEAG budget



MS MACAPAGAL

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PRESIDENT Arroyo has approved a whopping P111-million budget for the country's participation in the Vietnam South-east Asian Games on Dec. 5-12.

This was revealed by the chief disbursing agency, Philippine Sports Commission, yesterday as it green-lighted the country's drive to win 40 to 60 gold medals and place at least third overall.

PSC executive director Ed Mateo said they are expecting the money to be released within the week although it is not

clear yet where Malacañang would get the amount. Sources said Malacañang would get it from the Presidential contingency fund.

PSC officials said the amount was by far the highest ever allocated for the biennial meet, considering that the agency earlier reported the budget to be just P90 million.

The Philippine Olympic Committee first estimated it to cost a little over P40 million.

Mateo said sending one delegation member in Vietnam would cost P70 thousand, including plane fare, accommodation and allowances.

But Mateo said the amount (P111M) includes equipment which would eat up a lot from the budget considering that the country will send 449 athletes from 28 sports disciplines and 209 coaches and officials.

Sports officials said the President's gesture only gave a strong motivation to the

athletes to perform better compared with their dismal stint in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur edition where they landed fifth overall with 31 golds, 65 silvers and 67 bronzes.

This year, the Philippines will have to deal with competitors who have improved by leaps and bounds like Malaysia and host Vietnam, which is counting on new sports it has included in this year's calendar. Thailand and Indonesia, of course, remain the top contenders.

The Philippines' best finish in the meet was second in the 1991 Manila edition where it captured 91 golds.

Phone Pals oust Barakos

By June Navarro

ASI Taulava was a marked man throughout, but too bad Red Bull Barako forgot all about Damien Cantrell.

Cantrell sizzled in the fourth quarter, pumping in 15 of his game-high 39 points as Talk N Text eliminated Red Bull Barako, 95-81, from the semifinals of the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference last night at the Philsports Arena.

In the other game, Coca-Cola frustrated Barangay Ginebra and its legion of fans, 92-86, to arrange a semifinal clash with TNT.

Cantrell's heroics got overshadowed by the tragedy that befell Jimmy Alapag near the end of the contest.

Blood streamed down from Alapag's nose after Jimwell Torion hit him hard with a clothesline just as the rookie playmaker was about to dribble out of harm's way in the final 48.9 seconds.

Alapag was later brought to the Medical City for examination. Talk N Text officials suspected a broken cartilage on Alapag's nose.

"I felt really bad about what happened to Jimmy. It's totally uncalled for. It has no place in the league," said Talk N Text coach Joel Banal.

"On what penalty to slap on Torion, I guess it's going to be the commissioner's call. I believe the commissioner is a fair and honorable man and he will make the right decision," he added, referring to PBA Commissioner Noli Eala.

Eala said Torion, who was thrown out of the court for that dastardly act, would definitely be fined.

Taulava, with 10 points and 17 rebounds, got bottled up by the Barakos in the fourth but Cantrell came to the Phone Pals' rescue.

It will be the Phone Pals' second straight stint in the conference semifinals while the Barakos collapsed for the third straight playoff after finishing the last three conferences as the No. 1 team in the elimination round.

TALK N TEXT 95—Cantrell 39, Pablo 13, Taulava 10, Fran 10, Belano 10, Alapag 9, Locsin 2, Telan 2, Carey 0, Ravena 0.

RED BULL 81—Burrell 21, Torion 12, Harp 11, Valenzuela 9, Robinson 7, Villanueva 6, Asaytono 5, Pennisi 4, Se 2, Tugade 2, Miller 2.

Quarters: 19-12, 40-36, 63-60, 95-81.

Viva eyes 2nd win

VIVA Mineral Water-FEU tries to score another win when it battles ICTSI-La Salle at 1:45 p.m. today in the 2003 PBL Platinum Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

Having snapped a two-game skid, expect the Water Force to go all-out against the Archers, who are also seeking a second straight victory following two heart-breaking defeats.

Montana Pawnshop takes on Sunkist-UST at 3:45 p.m.

The Water Force posted an easy 77-66 victory over Sunkist-UST last Tuesday as they brandished the form that won them the UAAP title this year at the expense of the Ateneo Blue Eagles.

Coach Koy Banal knows how dangerous the Archers are but he's convinced his boys are up to the task.

"We have to elevate our game a notch higher and play a lot harder to win again," said Banal.

The Archers will also troop to the court with renewed confidence after scoring a 68-66 overtime win over Pash last Saturday.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-773 Series of 2003

CAGE WAR

Fiba backs Tiny's group

By Dennis U. Eroa

FOLLOWING the stand of its president, the central board of the ruling International Basketball Federation (Fiba) has reiterated its full support to the Tiny Literal-led Basketball Association of the Philippines even as it expressed regrets on the ongoing cage war in the country.

In a short but precise response to Literal's earlier letters assailing the moves of the Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc. to seize control, secretary general Patrick Baumann said the world's governing body in basketball is solidly behind BAP.

"The Fiba Central board, at its recent meeting in Madrid, has taken the view that the relationship of your federation as an affiliated member of Fiba remains unchanged from our perspective," Baumann wrote in his letter dated Nov. 14 from the Fiba headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Clear stand

Baumann said there is no reason for Fiba to enter into discussions that are currently being held in the Philippines because of its clear stand. Fiba president Carl Ching Menky had earlier assured Literal of his full support in an overseas call.

Baumann, however, stressed that the Central Board "regrets that basketball is once more in the negative spotlight in the Philippines."

BAP secretary general Graham Lim expressed elation on the Fiba's confirmation of its support.

"It is very clear that BAP is the sole and legitimate amateur basketball governing body in the Philippines," Lim said. "Bapi and its backers must accept this truth for the good of basketball."

Armed with a ruling from the Court of Appeals, Nic Jorge's Bapi has been trying to wrest control from the BAP.

Meanwhile, Literal announced the appointment of DILG Secretary Joey Lina as head of delegation for the men's and women's basketball teams in the coming Vietnam SEA Games.

A longtime basketball patron, Lina will provide support as the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier team defends its men's title.

Lina heads basketball delegation

INTERIOR and Local Government Secretary Jose Lina Jr. will be the delegation head of the Philippine men's and women's basketball teams seeing action in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games from Dec. 5-13.

The appointment of Lina, a well-known supporter of amateur basketball, was announced yesterday by Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) president Quintiliano Literal.

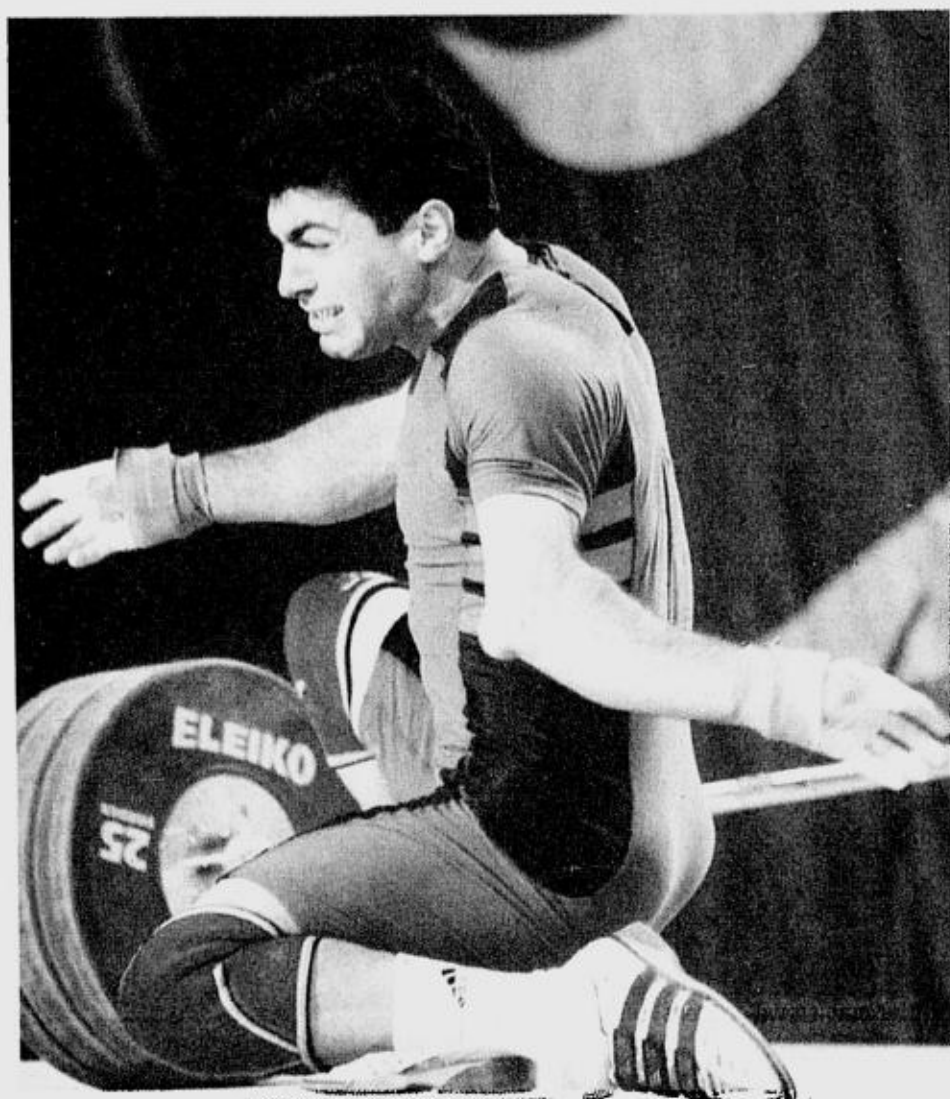
Lina is expected to cheer for the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier men's team and the RP-FedEx women's squad in the event to be held in Ho Chi Minh city.

Defending champion RP-Cebuana Lhuillier is composed of Richard Melencio, Celino Cruz, Gary David, Ranidel de Ocampo, Ervin Sotto, Chris Dennis Madrid, Paul Artadi, Willy Wilson, James Yap, Joseph Allan Salangsang, Recaredo Calimag, Jean Marc Pingris, Wesley Gonzales and Richard Alvarez. Head coach is Aric del Rosario to be assisted by David Zamar and Dong Vergeire. Team manager is Jean Henri Lhuillier and assistant manager is Danny Francisco. Gil Reglo is the Fiba referee.

The coaching staff is set to announce the team's final 12 after last night's practice at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

RP-FedEx, which will try to better its third place finish in the 1991 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games, is composed of Sylvia Valencia, Joan Grajales, Emelia Vega, Susan Bambico, Cheryl Lubiano, Marsha Faustino, Ana Marie Jaleco, Minerva Narcisa, Estrellita Enriquez, Matilde Carreon, Shella Esteban and Marites Gadian. Arturo Cristobal is the head coach with Conrado Pasco and Haydee Ong as his assistants. Jimmy Chan Cuan is the women's team manager. Arnolfo Bermeo is the Fiba referee.

RP-Cebuana Lhuillier is seeing action in the PBL Platinum Cup as part of its preparation for the biennial meet. The Nationals have beaten Viva Mineral Water, 78-71, and Sunkist, 81-76, in their first two games.



DISLOCATED ELBOW

Hossein Barkhah of Iran dislocates his elbow attempting to lift 157.5 kg in the snatch category in group A of the men's 77-kg weight class at the World Weightlifting Championship in Vancouver, British Columbia, Tuesday. Barkhah was hospitalized. REUTERS

Santos, Labay gain q'finals

SEA Games-bound Anna Patricia Santos, Alyssa Anne Labay and Czarina Mae Arevalo flashed superb forms to advance to the quarterfinals of the P400,000 Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Open Tennis Championships at the PCA indoor courts in Plaza Dilao.

Santos, whose victories in the Olivarez Cup, Coca-Cola Open and the Hilado Open

this year gave her the No. 1 ranking, posted a 6-4, 6-1 win over No. 13 Aileen Rogan to advance against the winner between No. 7 Ivy de Castro and No. 11 Divine Escala.

The second-ranked Labay of Bacolod City trimmed Annie de la Peña, 6-2, 6-4, to advance against sixth seed Deena Rose Cruz, a 6-4, 6-4 winner over La Salle's Bernardine Sepulveda.

With rematch virtually gone, where's GMA?

MANNY "Powerpacked" Pacquiao has got a problem. And, alas, it was his undoing.

For beating Marco Antonio Barrera black and blue on Sunday at the famed Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, his supposed mandatory rematch with the much-venerated Mexican has suddenly become in jeopardy.

I said supposed because Pacquiao and Barrera were reported to have signed a contract before the fight stipulating a rematch should Pacquiao beat Barrera. Pacquiao defeated Barrera by 11th round technical knockout in a fight that literally defrocked Barrera of his myth of invincibility.

Barrera suffered an embarrassment that pricked Mexican pride and must have caused Emiliano Zapata to turn in his grave.

So badly battered was Barrera that his own brother had to climb the ring himself and stop the fight with four seconds left in the 11th round. That gave Pacquiao his 29th victory by stoppage in a 38-2-1, win-loss-draw record. The fight should have been stopped as early as the ninth round, when Barrera appeared almost defenseless under the constant siege from a tireless, superbly conditioned Pacquiao. Before the fight, Barrera has never been stopped in 125 fights—65 of those when he was still an amateur. He was 57-3 as a pro before Sunday's carnage.

And so if you were Barrera and had absorbed such terrible beating from a mere pretender to your crown, would you still want to fight Pacquiao a second time?

I guess your answer would be a resounding no, followed by: "Get me a lawyer. An intruder with murder in his eyes needs to be jailed!"

Hey, that supposed Sunday Stroll for Barrera was nothing but the exact opposite: Sunday Shock.

Mexico's icon had just been butchered by a

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



man whose punching power had been so belittled, his own mother had to rise like an honorable statesman on a question of privilege.

If you failed to see the fight for one reason or another, you just missed watching the Fight of the Year. Or will someone please tell Ring Magazine to stop searching for The Fight of the Decade?

The ingredients of a classic fight were all there. But this one, boy, it had twists as bizarre as Tyson's bio-data, if not Kris Aquino's love life.

In this fight, Barrera the favorite became Barrera the fake. Pacquiao made all that possible.

In this fight, Barrera the tiger became Barrera the paper tiger. Pacquiao made all that possible.

In this fight, Barrera the legend became Barrera the laggard. Pacquiao made all that possible.

In this fight, Barrera the invincible became Barrera the "knockable." Pacquiao made all that possible.

Barrera got knocked down three times when, on the eve of the fight, he was supposed to be the 5-1 pick to be doing that to Pacquiao.

And so the question: What happens now to that supposed rematch allegedly assuring Pacquiao of \$750,000?

Who would be the foolish guy wanting to stage a rematch now? The wily Bob Arum? The beguiling Don King who will sell his mother's soul to the devil if only to fleece you of your last penny?

I don't believe Oscar De La Hoya, who promoted the fight and owns the so-called rematch clause of the fight, would be so naive as to pursue another Pacquiao-Barrera fight. For one, Barrera's not dumb fool to fall for it; his IQ even tells it so. For another, Mexico's president will not allow another shaming of Barrera, the best that Mexico has ever had since it discovered the taco, burrito and chicken fajita.

In case you missed one column some days back, I said Barrera comes from a wealthy family, his father being a construction magnate that builds, mainly, movie theaters in Mexico. Barrera the boxer also works as an executive in a film outfit.

I had also said here that if Barrera got himself badly beaten, which came out eerily true, the Mexican might be forced to retire and next pursue his second love after boxing—become a lawyer.

In that department, Barrera should really be thankful to Pacquiao as the calling "attorney" now seems very much attainable. That is, if Barrera's brain surgery had not been affected by those terrible shots he absorbed in this particular sorry Sunday afternoon.

With Pacquiao's first crack at a megabuck fight now almost flushed down the drain, will somebody please assure Mr. Powerpacked from GenSan of at least a semblance of a megabuck Christmas?

President Macapagal-Arroyo should be the best candidate for that.

Who said Santa Claus can't disguise as a lady astride a reindeer-drawn cart?

SPORTSWATCH

RP Open invitational 9-ball up

THE 1ST Philippine Open & Invitational 9-ball tournament featuring 16 cue masters from the United States, Europe and Asia will be held at Octagon Hall, 4th level of Robinsons Galleria, Mandaluyong City on Nov. 26-29. "This is our Christmas presentation," said Sportsman Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, president of Puyat Sports which is co-producing the four-day pool extravaganza with ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. "It is also in answer to requests from overseas Filipinos who subscribe to ABS-CBN's Filipino channel to telecast more billiards tournaments." National Idol Efrén "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Alex Pagulayan are among the 16 seeded players.

Enduro 2003, Honda Run at Subic

AS PART of this year's Philippine Motorsports Festival, Sports Values Inc. will hold the Goodyear Ducaro GA Enduro 2003 and Honda Run What You Brung on Nov. 22-23 at the Subic International Raceway. The country's leading competition drivers are expected to see action in the Goodyear Enduro, a gruelling four-hour endurance race starting at 11 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 22. On Saturday and Sunday, it will be the turn of novice drivers to test their skills in the Honda-sponsored Run What You Brung competitions. "It will be a fitting year-end for another successful motorsports season," said SVI president Pocholo Ramirez. For details, call the PMF Manila secretariat at 671-6926 or the SBMA Promotions and Marketing Department at (6347) 252-4626 and 252-4354.

Lito Puyat Cup starts Saturday

SIXTEEN teams, led by UAAP champion Far Eastern and NCAA titlist Letran will compete in the "Lito Puyat Cup" basketball tournament starting on Saturday, Nov. 22, at the FEU gym. Five games will kick off the Red Bull-sponsored tourney honoring Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat II, president of the World Basketball Federation (Fiba) from 1976 to 1984 and the Basketball Association of the Philippines for almost three decades. It will be De La Salle against San Sebastian College at 9 a.m., University of Perpetual Help against Adamson at 10:30, UP against San Beda at 12:30 p.m., Philippine Christian University against Ateneo at 2 and National University against PCU-B at 3:30. "We are happy to sponsor this event for Mr. (Lito) Puyat, who has done a lot for world basketball and Philippine sports," said George C. Chua, executive vice president of Photokina Marketing Corp., which distributes Red Bull.

Bonds wins sixth MVP award

NEW YORK—Barry Bonds won his record sixth National League MVP award Tuesday, becoming the first player to get the honor in three consecutive years. The San Francisco outfielder, the only player to win an MVP award more than three times, received 28 of 32 first-place votes and 426 points in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. St. Louis outfielder Albert Pujols was second with three first-place votes and 303 points. Atlanta outfielder Gary Sheffield got the other first-place vote and was third with 247 points. At 39 years, 3 1/2 months, Bonds is the second-oldest MVP, trailing Pittsburgh's Willie Stargell, who was a few months older when he tied for the award in 1979. AP

Top LGBA breeder known tonight

THE LGBA Breeder of the Year 2003 will be known tonight when the "LGBA 7-Stag Derby" finals get underway at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. The winner will get a big trophy and hefty cash prize courtesy of top promoter Rolly Ligon. Among the top contenders are Blandy Tolentino (San Pablo Heat), Mauro Prieto (Anito), Benjie Lim and Justice Magdangal Elma (Banahaw), Ram Lopez (Altuz), Boy Gamilla (BMJ), Jess de Veyra (BBC-Jaf III), Ram Lopez (Altuz), Maj. Bobby Doromal (Eskrimador), Anthony Lim (Piwa Lucban), Jay de Jesus (Guts and Glory Alliance DJ). Meanwhile, the "Apordabol Na, Incredibol Pa 5-Cock Derby" of promoter Rolly Ligon, slated Nov. 29, Dec 6, 11 and 13, is expected to have no less than 300 entries. For inquiries, contact 833-2275 and 833-163.

Mandaluyong Coliseum reopens

THE NEWLY renovated Mandaluyong Coliseum reopens at 8 a.m. today via the "Grand Opening 1-Cock Ulutan" with well-liked promoters Kags Paliza and Aba Badiola as hosts. The following prizes are at stake: fastest champion, P20,000 and six cu. ft. refrigerator; second, P15,000 and 21 color TV; third, P10,000 and washing machine; fourth, P5,000 and washing machine. Fifth to 25th winners will get P2,000 each. A bonus of P1,000 per win will also be given. Entry fee is P1,300. Interested parties may contact 534-4110 and 0918-5030528. Meanwhile, the "Jeep Papremyo 2-Cock Ulutan," another promotion of Paliza and Badiola, is set at La Loma Cockpit on Nov. 25, offering a guaranteed prize of P300,000 (owner-type jeep included).

Bikers' golf meet at Aguinaldo

BIKERS will gather at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club in Quezon City for the 1st ever staging of the LMFI (Luzon Motorcyclists Federation Inc.) President's Cup Golf Tournament. Organized by the LMFI, the tournament aims to raise funds to support the various civic activities of the federation, which is under the aegis of the Philippine National Police Traffic Management Group. LMFI president Col. Fernando Pace said the golfest is backed by LBS Telecoms Construction, Goldeed Development Corp., TGM Philippines, Traffic Management Group (TMG)/PNP, Metro Convergence, clubs and friends of the LMFI, ECI Phils., Pacific Palm Corp., Pilipinas Shell, L.E.R.A.P., Petrolino Inc. and BMW Motorrad Phils.



ARANETA DERBY

National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders chair Ricoy Palmares addresses the media in connection with the ongoing "Bakbakan 2003 National 8-Stag Derby" at the Araneta Coliseum during last Tuesday's Sports Forum at the Manila Pavilion Hotel. With him (from left) are Thunderbird Power Feeds' Rolando Luzong and Dante Nacar, Boy Diaz of the Luzon Gamefowl Breeders Association and Vice Mayor Homer Salgado of Iloilo.

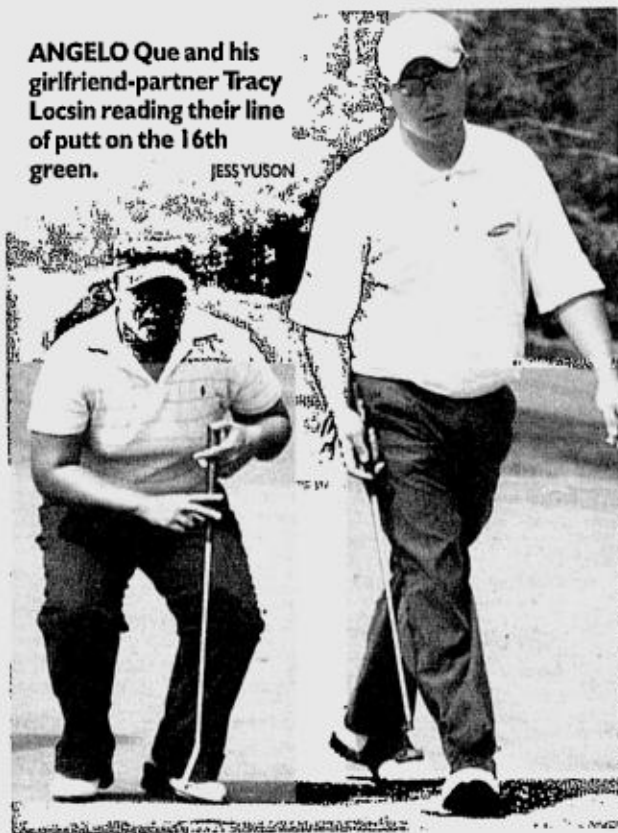


BULACAN CHESSFEST

NM Nick Nisperos (left) and engineer Albert "Bito" Cruz shake hands after making the ceremonial moves in the 1st Albert Cruz Chess Cup in Meycauayan, Bulacan. Also shown are NM Marlon Bernardino, Jan Paragua, Eli Legaspi, Paul Yamson, Richard de la Cruz and Gigi Cruz.

ANGELO Que and his girlfriend-partner Tracy Locsin reading their line of putt on the 16th green.

JESSYUSON



U-BIX PRO-AM

Gerard-JR duo shares lead

By Jong Arcano

BACK to the competitive fairways after a two-year absence, Gerard Cantada made up for lost time by joining hands with in-form JR Tanpinco for a three-over-par 74 yesterday and a share of the lead with the Ruel Bañares-Marvin Dumandan tandem in the opening round of the P1.2 million U-Bix National Pro-Am at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club.

The 26-year-old Cantada, the former amateur standout who's now a full-time teaching pro at Wack Wack, and the Bacolod-based Tanpinco, 22, survived a bad stretch of three bogeys on a four-hole stretch from the 11th with an explosive finish that saw them shoot two easy birdies on the last four holes.

On a day when no one from among the 97 teams came close to the par-71 of the hazard-laden Langer layout, national player Dumandan used his knowledge of his home course to help his pro partner Bañares get to the top.

The frontrunners were a stroke ahead of Richard Sinfuego-Bobby Iñigo

and Jorge Abad-Michael Bibat while 2001 champions Noli Kempis and Don Erwin Vinluan tied for fifth spot with Rico and Tony Depilo at 76.

The defending champion Miñoza brothers, Raul and Paul, fell five strokes off the lead after carding a 79.

Cantada came very close to winning the event when the event was still known as the Boni Pro-am in 1995. But Gerard and his pro partner, the now-retired Rudy Labares, lost in a playoff to Vivencio Lascuña and nephew Antonio, who was still then an amateur.

Though lacking in practice rounds, Cantada believes the alternate-shot format gives a "part-time golfer" like him a chance against the touring pros.

"I've not been playing since I went to

serious teaching. But I made a promise to JR to form the partnership we were supposed to forge last year and we're happy to be in the lead," said Cantada, who last played a tournament two years ago in the Philippine Open at Wack Wack.

Meanwhile, Rodrigo Cuello and Mike Medado topped the pro-am side-event held Tuesday with a net 63.

Tournament sponsors are U-Bix Konica Digital Copiers, Epson Printers, U-Bix Riso Digital Duplicators, S-Yard, Bravo Golf, Pivo Praha, Grappa's, Cafe Appassionato, Nike Golf (PacSports), DHL Worldwide Express/WWW Express, Airlift Asia, ESAPSA, Pagcor, PNOG, Toyota Motors, San Miguel Corp. and Petron Corp.

Martial arts tilt slated Dec. 27 at Philsports

THE BEST stand-up fighters from various self-defense schools in the country take center stage during the "Mano Mano" full contact martial arts competition on Dec. 27 at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

Dubbed, "Labanan ng mga Tunay na Laki" by the organizing CEMG, the event will showcase the best in full-contact stand-up fighting using the fists, knees, feet and elbows that will be covered with protective pads. The fighters will use standard boxing gloves.

"Mano Mano" was created in the mold of Japan's K-1, a professional kickboxing tournament that has gained large following in America and Europe.

Using the modified version of the K-1 rules, the event features traditional martial arts like kung-fu karate, taekwondo, pentjak silat, kumtao, muay thai, boxing alongside Filipino-owned styles like kali, yaw-yan, sari-an, bakbakan and suntokaran.

"Mano-Mano will showcase not only combat skills but the art and discipline that define a true martial artist. After all, a real warrior is one who does not go out looking for a fight," said CEMG event director, Ed Dames.

The event, touted to be the next best thing in Philippine sports, offers a total cash pot of P50,000, making it the biggest ever local martial arts competition in terms of prize money.

Aguilar rules Mayor's Cup

CALTEX-REVTEX stalwart Glenn Aguilar mesmerized thousands of Mindanao fans when he ruled the pro open and 125 categories of the 2nd Mayor's Cup Motocross Championship at the Surallah Stadium in Surallah, South Cotabato.

Aguilar gave the crowd several glimpses of his awesome riding prowess when he topped the expert division, thwarting the challenge of Jovie Saulog (2nd), teammate Bebet dela Cruz (3rd), Popeye Rubi (4th) and Weng Yapparcon (5th).

The Revtex rider, who will be crowned Asia's best rider later this month in the FIM Series,

which will culminate in Guam, was even more dominant in centerpiece pro open.

He shoved Rubi to second place by as much as 10 seconds, which in motocross standards is already a lightyear. Dela Cruz, Saulog and Yapparcon placed 3rd to 5th, respectively.

As an appreciation to the roaring reception he got from the people of South Cotabato, Aguilar spiked his amazing run with several crowd-pleasing jumps and treated them to his own brand of showtime.

Aguilar is also backed by No Fear, Sidi Boots, Renthal, HJC Helmets, Oakley and Pro Grip.

Ozamiz repulses MayniLA 5

DEFENDING champion Compak Shineway-Ozamiz subdued Restolax/Mail & More-MayniLA, 84-77, Tuesday and upped its mark to 3-2 in the 2003 Panasonic-National Basketball League Regional Cup tournament at the CP Tinga Memorial Hall in Taguig.

The Cebuano's third win set the stage for a leadership battle with the Ilocos Sur Snipers, who also have a 3-0 card, at 2 p.m. today at the Adamson gym.

Ozamiz seeks its fourth win in six games against Grachiya-Adamson in the other match

at 4 p.m.

The tourney is sponsored by Panasonic, BJ Star Logistics, Sulpicio Lines, Molten and Nature's Spring Mineral Water.

Scores:

OZAMIZ 84—Guerrero 26, Rodriguez 16, Echavez 12, Cabigkis 8, Booker 6, Ferraren 6, Sampilo 4, De Jesus 4, Cabrera 2, Flores 0.

MAYNILA 77—Manucat 15, Mallari 15, Epondulan 13, Caceres 10, Serrano 8, Corbin 7, Ricafuente 4, Salvador 3, Buendia 2, Garcia 0.

Quarters: 25-24, 48-45, 63-57, 74-77.

Mercado, pal shine

PSA awardees Reynato Rener Mercado and Judith Anne Melencio of the Philippines added another feather to their cap by winning three gold medals in the just-concluded Manila IDSIF (International Dance Sport Federation) Open-Pagoda Cup and seventh National Dancesport-Alaxan FR Championships at the Philsports Arena.

Sharing stellar billing with them were young dance athletes Brian Joseph and Karla Ocana, who also won three golds in the year-ending dancefest hosted by the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines headed by Becky Garcia.

Cited by the Philippine Sportswriters Association, Mercado, 14, and Melencio, 12, won the gold medal in the Latin junior disciplines of the national championships. The Ocana tandem topped the standard youth of the IDSIF Open and the ten-dance event and standard youth categories of the national championships.

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RACING

1. Money-line 2. Al-ways Flo-rence 3. Going Free 4. Manila Slew 5. He's So Lucky 6. Zarafan Mo 7. Doctor Ben
- Race 3--1. Touch of Luck 2. Classic Model 3. Princess Malinda
- Race 4--1. Prince Nicholas 2. E-Mail 3. Elusive Quality
- Race 5--1. Miwa's Treasure 2. Silver Flyer 3. Shotgun Banjo

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

76ers vs Raptors; 8 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Warriors vs Rockets; 7 p.m.; IBC 13 - It's Iverson against Carter as Philadelphia battles Toronto in the east while Golden State faces red hot Houston in the west.

NBA Greatest Games - Lakers vs Kings, Game 7, 2002 Western Finals; 12 noon (r-12:30 a.m.); Solar Sports - Los Angeles puts a historical stamp on its dynasty, outlasting Sacramento, 112-106, in a Game 7 overtime thriller that capped a classic Western

Race 6-

1. Aprey's Choice 2. Gentleman's Lady 3. Ahead of Time 4. Serendipity
- Race 7--1. Suterian Era 2. Wynona Raider 3. Jerold's Dream 4. Pen Tristram 5. Yours Truly
- Race 8--1. Vhinggget 2. Fair Go 3. The Strategist 4. Good Rate
- Race 9--1. Winning Prize 2. Roppongi 3. Compañero 4. Sham Sham 5. Hole in One 6. Material Trick

Conference Finals. TENNIS: ATP Japan Open 2003; 8 p.m.; Solar Sports - Tennis action goes underway from the Land of the Rising Sun

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BY STEVEN PABALINAS

**HOROSCOPE**

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're an idealistic fighter for whatever you believe in. You want to change the world for the better. Because of this, you are often involved in controversy and struggle. Loyal to family, you are known for your biting humor. You are bit of a rebel. New, exciting beginnings and fresh starts await you this year.

Birthday of: Edwin Hubble, astronomer; Robert F. Kennedy, politician; Bo Derek, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): It's important to be conscious of what you are doing now. You could be tempted to take on more than you can handle, especially at work. Be sensible.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your ambition at work is boundless now. Be careful that you don't bite off more than you can chew. And don't alienate those whom you might need later. (Oh, yeah.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): For whatever reason, you might really go into debt now. Major expenses and commitments could be serious. You're inclined to be a big spender, so be cautious.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): It's not worth fighting with a friend over an ideal or issue. What's more important is to keep your friendship. It's best if you agree to disagree. (Not everyone thinks alike.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your plans related to publishing, travel and education are quite ambitious, aren't they? Better to walk before you run. Just begin slowly, putting one foot in front of the other.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Remember to relate to others as an ordinary human being. It's easy to feel a bit puffed-up now. (And I'm not talking about gas.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Do not insist on getting your own way at work. Yes, you are probably correct, but is it worth alienating co-workers to get your way? I think not.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Do not promise children more than you can deliver. You're tempted to offer them the Moon. The same goes for romantic relationships.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Plans to make changes at home look so exciting, you might be willing to take a big chance today. Check every angle out. If you can reduce your expectations, it would be wiser.

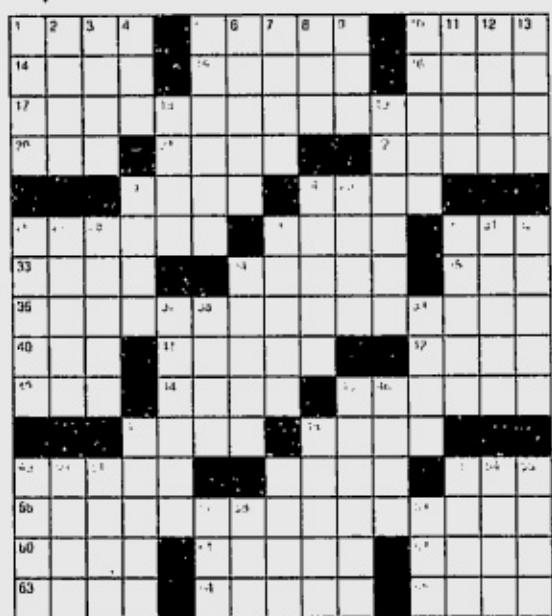
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You don't have to convince everybody that you're right about something today. They can walk around ignorant. In the meantime, you will be happier and have more peace of mind.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Leave your wallet at home today. Actually, you are doing some serious spending right now. Just make sure you don't go overboard. How many fireplaces do you need?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Don't overexert yourself or exhaust your body in any way. And definitely, do not take foolish risks that could lead to an accident.

DAILY CROSSWORD**ACROSS**

- 1 Asian desert
- 5 Yul Brynner film, "Solomon and"
- 10 Tailless amphibian
- 14 Golden call, for one
- 15 Virile guy
- 16 Pond growth
- 17 Volume I
- 20 Make a boo-boo
- 21 Pause
- 22 Sudden thrust
- 23 "Clair de"
- 24 Sidekick
- 26 Shop in Chihuahua
- 29 French socialist premier
- 30 Classified
- 33 Prayer ender
- 34 Straighten
- 35 Sun, follower
- 36 Volume II
- 40 Ah, I see!
- 41 Mountain ridge
- 42 VOA group
- 43 "King" Cole
- 44 Obi
- 45 Ruble fraction
- 47 up (restrained)
- 48 Draw breath
- 49 Ike's opponent
- 52 Margarita garnish
- 53 Grimm imp
- 56 Volume III
- 60 CCCP, to us
- 61 Become permanent
- 62 Wee bit
- 63 Distribute
- 64 Garlic-basil sauce
- 65 Hey, over here!

By Robert Zimmerman
San Diego, CA

11/20/03

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

OKRA PORTO CLAD
TIER AFIRE HAVI
TWENTYFOURSEVEN
OIL RTES AWARE
LOON CLUE
AROUND THE CLOCK
STUNT RAGE PAN
HAIG PUDES PIPE
URN SILL JINEW
EIGHT DAYS A WEEK
EASY AGES
ALIAS MEE CBS
MONTH IN MONTH OUT
PORE BROAD ACRE
STIR MAGNA HARP

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- DOWN**
- 1 Barbed remark
 - 2 Redolence
 - 3 Death of the party?
 - 4 Sort or kind
 - 5 Singer Easton
 - 6 "Demian" writer
 - 7 Give off
 - 8 Valise
 - 9 Lee or Landers
 - 10 Pianist Art
 - 11 "Havana" star
 - 12 Really excited
 - 13 Laeries or Ophelia, e.g.
 - 18 Medicine
 - 19 Woman grad
 - 23 First name of 11D
 - 24 Weather conditions
 - 25 Gargantuan
 - 26 Part of BLT
 - 27 City on the Missouri
 - 28 Bus station
 - 29 Northeast
 - 30 England river
 - 31 Greek column type
 - 32 Be stealthy
 - 34 Bomb blast, in headlines
 - 37 Cheese base
 - 38 Persia, today
 - 39 Extra in a play, for short
 - 45 Geisha garb
 - 46 Kiln
 - 47 San Diego ballplayer
 - 48 Permitted by law
 - 49 Clarifying sulfate
 - 50 Medicinal quantity
 - 51 for life
 - 52 D-day craft
 - 53 Aphrodite's son
 - 54 Scads
 - 55 Lacking fliz
 - 57 Paranormal insight
 - 58 Observe
 - 59 Overtune

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



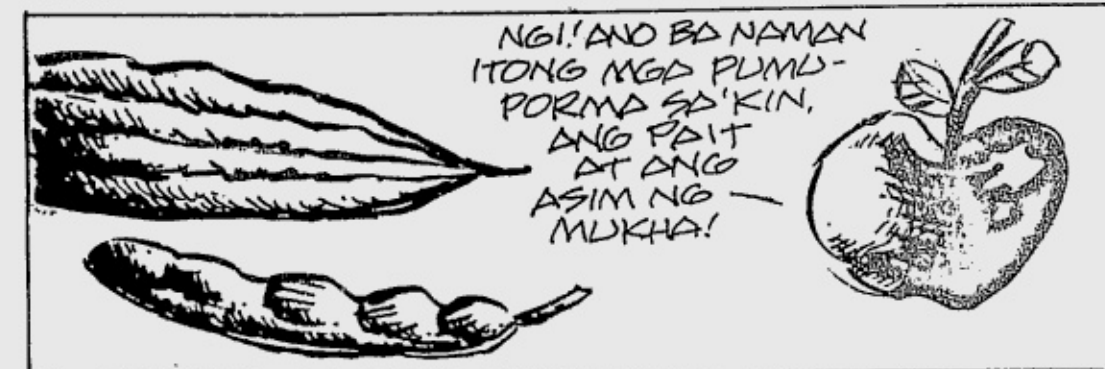
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING



Tours, Leisure & Chow

cmadmba@inquirer.com.ph
897-8808 local 209 and 238

Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design

Waterfront Cafe Uno American food festival

AMERICAN food is no longer just mashed potatoes and roast beef. For over two hundred years, American dinner tables have welcomed the ethnic, regional, and home-style fare of many different places and people. Some of these dishes-Ravioli, Beef Tacos, Swedish Meatballs, Beef Stroganoff, Potato Salad-have been around so long they seem as American as anything else. We've also greedily appropriated all kinds of regional specialties, dishes like New

England Clam Chowder, Gumbo, Cornbread, and Texas Barbecued Brisket. And then there are the home classics that seem to come from everybody's grandmother's kitchen. In Café Uno's American Food Festival, it is deliciously clear that these foods have

become American, and together they form the exciting and unique American cuisine.

This month, in celebration of everything American and in the age-old tradition of Thanksgiving, Executive Chef Dietmar Dietrich brings together all the wonderfully diverse foods that we love to eat: the best ethnic dishes, the best re-

gional dishes, and the best classic American home cooking. Only here will you find the most authentic Cajun recipes side by side with thrilling Chinese-American dishes, timeless Brooklyn-Italian meals alongside the sizzling Cuban specialties of Miami... not to mention that essential centerpiece of mashed potatoes and pot roast.

Taste classic American favorites such as Pecan Nut-Honey Coated Fish Fillet, Hickory Pork Spareribs with Jim Beam Whisky Sauce, All American Salmon Fillet with Mushroom Sauce, Spiced Rice with Orange, Creole Jambalaya, Stuffed Chicken Smithfield, Chuck Wagon Western Bean Casserole, Baked Potatoes with a delicious spread of condiments.

Catch the savory fusion of North and South American flavors this month! Come to Café Uno for its American Food Festival Lunch and Dinner Buffet for only P600.00 net per person from Nov. 21 to 30. For reservations and inquiries, please call 232-6888 local 8604 and 8605 or Manila Sales and Reservations office at (02)687-0888.



Where to Stop Where to GO

A weekly directory
of the country's best establishments

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Dusit Hotel Nikko MANILA Dusit Hotel Nikko Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil. Tel. 867-3333 Email: dushitmanila@dusit.com http://manila.dusit.com	The Bellevue Manila North Bridgeway, Northgate Alabang, Muntinlupa Tel. (632) 771-8181/fax (632) 771-8282 www.thebellevue.com.ph
Barcelo Hotels and Resorts 27th Floor, Trident Towers, 312 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City 1200 Tel. (02) 889-1000/fax (02) 889-2765 www.barcelo-asia.com	Waterfront Hotel Lahug 1 Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City Tel. (6332) 232-6888/fax (6332) 232-6880 www.waterfronthotels.net
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City Garden Hotel-Makati Makati Ave., cor. Kalyaan St., Makati City Tel. (02) 899-1111/Fax (02) 899-1415 Email: makati@citygardenhotels.com	City Travel Hotel 15 Kiasad Road, Baguio City Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457
THE MARCO POLO MANILA The Marco Polo CM Recto St. Davao City 8000 Tel. (082) 221-0888/fax (082) 225-0111 www.marcohotels.com	Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93 / (074) 447-8895 to 98 Fax. (074) 447-0494
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HOTEL SUPREME MANILA Hotel Supreme 113 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City Tel. (074) 443-2011 to 18 / Fax. (074) 442-2855	Taal Vista Hotel Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City Tel. (046) 413-1000/Fax. (046) 413-1225
Skyrise Hotel 18 Dominican Road, Baguio City Tel. (074) 445-6834 to 36 / Fax. (074) 443-3897	

For Feedback and inquiries, call
899-4426 or 897-8808 loc 209

The Bellevue Hotel: the venue for premier events

EXCLUSIVE events and special moments continue to happen at the venue of choice in the Alabang area-The Bellevue Hotel. The first and only full service business hotel to rise in the southern Metro Manila area, The Bellevue once again held a successful wine tasting event at Alabang's most celebrated entertainment center, the 20/20.

"We are proud to hold the distinction of being the newest social and business hotspot in Alabang, and our guests can be assured that this is just a sampling of the many events that we are organizing," Cyndy Tan-Jarabata, the Bellevue's effi-

cient general manager said.

For this particular evening, Premiere Wines brought to the eventful wine tasting affair some of their best spirits. Amidst the panoramic views of the famed Manila Bay sunset, scenic Tagaytay, Laguna de Bay, the Alabang residential areas and the Makati skyline, distinguished guests sat in rapt attention while listening to the tastings notes made by the wine master.

An array of fine wines, such as the light Ruffino Orvieto Classico, the medium-bodied Antares Merlot and the tangy Wolf Blass Red Label lifted the spirits of every attendee.

The Bellevue Hotel, the "beautiful view," as its name is translated from French, represents only the best that business hotels offer-elegance, efficient service, friendly staff, convenient location, superb food, modern amenities and exciting activities at affordable prices. For inquiries, call 771-8181.



MARILYN Santelices and
Bernadette Chung

Fiesta San Miguel's entertainment line-up for November

DUSIT Hotel Nikko's Fiesta San Miguel - the first and only bar and restaurant in a hotel offering freshly brewed San Miguel beer along with an array of Filipino and international cuisine has prepared a superb line-up of leading bands and performers to entertain guest and diners. Catch one of the country's leading band - Route '70 play every Monday, 9 p.m. back to back with Joanne at Fiesta San Miguel of Dusit Hotel Nikko. Other bands lined-up for November are: Niche and Indio I on Tuesdays, every Wednesday is MMC with Sign of Times, Ecoustic Soul with Rowena and Ronnie on Thursdays, George and Parliament Syndicate on Fridays and Archi Band with Red Velvet every Saturday. Enjoy the music and food of Fiesta San Miguel with their Beer All-You-Can on Freshly brewed San Miguel Pale Pilsen and San Mig light for only P270++ from 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. 50 percent off on selected drinks from 9 p.m. onwards. For queries and reservations, call 867-3333 extension 3308.

Hotel service with a warm smile in a cool climate

AMIDST the economic boom, the City of Pines, otherwise known as the Summer Capital of the Philippines brought about the rise of hotels and inns to cater to the tourism clientele both from the Philippines and from other countries.

It was in the year 2001 particularly in the month of July, marked the grand opening of City Travel Hotel. Strategically located right at the heart of the central business district, just at the back of the historical Burnham Park, a famous landmark of Baguio City.

We have 34 elegant, fully carpeted and spacious rooms and suites specifically designed to make you feel at home and comfortable, with an electronic dial lock system, the first hotel in the City to install such technology ensuring privacy and safety. Each room is equipped with a colored television with cable, a telephone line, hot and cold shower with bathtub.

We also have an Executive Boardroom that can accommodate 30-40 people, conducive to seminars and corporate meetings. Our function hall, uniquely called Auracaria Hall, has a 250 seating capacity making it an excellent venue for weddings, baptisms, birthdays and for any special occasion worth celebrating. The ambience, packages and amenities we offer makes such celebrations worth remembering and makes you want to keep on coming back.

The Gecko Bar and Restaurant, situated at the lobby of the hotel offers an array of delectable dishes that would soothe the palate. This is a delightful place to unwind after a hard day's work or just to relax and enjoy an excellent meal without the hassle and hurry of the city. Coupled with a fast service of our courteous waiters, the Gecko Bar and Restaurant is definitely an excellent choice.

We also cater and delight song-lovers,

singers and singer-wannabe's by offering a KTV, privately enjoyed by your chosen set of friends, all consumable at a very affordable price worth spending.

Our health club facility has modern gym equipment for the health buff to enjoy and use.

Our elevator gives you a panoramic view of Burnham Park by day and a scenic view of the City at night. Guests and visitors need not worry about your cars, since we have a spacious and safe parking lot manned by trained and efficient security force.

City Travel Hotel upholds the adage that our guests and visitors is our number one asset, aside from our facilities, our hotel is manned with efficient and courteous staff driven with a good management.

For us, service is where our heart is and this starts with a warm smile, only at City Travel Hotel.

The Barcelo Pearl Farm Island Resort brings you the best of November

THE BARCELÓ Pearl Farm Island Resort gives you more reasons to relax, have fun, and indulge in tropical bliss with its "November Best" special packages.

Packages are ideally priced at P1,400 per person (based on twin sharing), which affords you with overnight accommodations in a well-appointed room. The packages include roundtrip airport and boat transfers, welcome drink upon arrival, breakfast at the Maranao Restaurant, and complimentary use of selected recreational facilities. This limited offer is valid until Nov. 30 only.

Located in the quiet side of Samal Island, The Barceló Pearl Farm Island Resort is an ideal getaway for travelers who would like to take a breather from the hurly burly of city life. With its white sand beaches, flourishing flora and fauna, deluxe accommodations that perfectly blend with its natural surroundings and the Yang-Yang Soothing Lounge which offers natural wellness and healing treatments, the resort beckons with the promise of a relaxing and private retreat within a picture perfect natural backdrop.

The island resort is amongst the properties managed and operated by the FilBarcelo Group. The other Philippine properties under its care are the Barceló Sarabia Manor Hotel and Convention Center in Iloilo City, Barceló Asturias Hotel in Puerto Pincasa, Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City, Barceló Eagle Point Resort in Mabini, Batangas, and the exclu-

The island resort
is amongst the
properties
managed and
operated by the
FilBarcelo Group

sive Club Punta Fuego and Terrazas de Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas. Each property has its own unique charm and character, but all carry with it FilBarcelo's distinct brand of service.

For inquiries and reservations, please call their Manila Sales office at Tel. Nos. 885-7038 or 889-1000. You must visit their website at www.barcelo-asia.com.



Boob-tube booboo

HOST: Why are you supporting this particular candidate for president?
Guest: I once heard him speak, and the speech was so good—so inspiring. It leaps my spirits!
(Oh, wow!)

Host: You look so stylish—did

you just fly in from Paris?
Guest: No, actually, I just flew in from Madrid!
(Go with the flow!)

Host: Do you speak Spanish?
Guest: Yes I do, but not grammatically.

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

(No me digas!)

Host: Tell us about your family.
Guest: Well, we're all college graduates in our family. Education is very important to us!
Host: Well, I'm impressed! What about you, what course did you take up?
Guest: Secretarial.
(Wheel!)

Host: What did you want to be when you were a child?
Guest: Ever since, a model. I wanted to be the one of the best! (Well, it's the thought that counts...)

Host: What course are you taking now?

Guest: Oh, I'm not studying now. I graduated already!
(Graduated? That's—grand!)

Host: What asset do you have as a performer that sets you apart from others?
Guest: Well, one thing for sure, I have the confident!
(Great, you'll need it!)

Host: What are you prepared to do to become a star?
Guest: Gawgawin ko ang lahat!
(Artistang gawgaw!)

Host: Why do you want to become a star?
Guest: Kasi, gusto kong tumulong sa mga bata sa lansangan.
(Explain the connection—please!)

Host: I hear you're fond of jewelry?
Guest: Oh, yes!
Host: What is your favorite piece of jewelry?
Guest: It's necklace.

Host: Why a necklace?
Guest: Because it's necklace who bring glamour in you!
(Sige na ngal)

'Consuming Passions'

ANVIL Publishing is launching its new book, "Consuming Passions—Philippine Collectibles," at 6 p.m. on Nov. 20 at the Reading Room, Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Avenue. The book is edited by Jaime C. Laya and features the fascinating collections of Gilda Cordero-Fernando, Manuel L. Quezon III, Thelma Sioson San Juan, Erlinda E. Panlilio, Juan T. Gatabonton, Ana Maria L. Harper, Armand V. Fabella and many others.

Centennial concert

TENOR Octavio Cruz, a star in Manila's opera world from the '30s to the '50s will be given a musical centennial tribute at 5 p.m. on Nov. 23 at the Pasig Museum in Pasig City. The centennial concert features Nelyn Cabahug, Noel

Azcona, Joan Cano, GJ Herman Gomez and Mary Anne Espina.

Cruz appeared in lead roles in operas like "La Traviata," "Lucia di Lammermoor," "Aida," "Il Trovatore," "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Faust." He also taught music and mounted operas in schools like La Salle, PWU, Sta. Isabel and Rizal High School. Call 0918 7376901.

'Gothka'

HALLE Berry and Robert Downey Jr. topple the new suspense thriller "Gothka." The film is about Dr. Miranda Grey (Berry), a criminal psychologist who awakens to find herself a patient in her own mental institution, with no memory of the murder she's apparently committed.

As she struggles to reclaim her sanity, she soon realizes that she's become the pawn of a vengeful spirit.

For his part, Downey portrays Dr. Pete Graham, Miranda's skeptical colleague and friend.

"Gothka" is directed by Matthieu Kassovitz.

Ryan Agoncillo in Studio 23's 'Kiss the Cook'

STUDIO 23's "Kiss the Cook" reintroduces the joy of cooking to the modern day foodie. The show runs every Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

Host Ryan Agoncillo brings fun into cooking with this upbeat show for single people on the go, young couples just starting out, and every kitchen neophyte who wants to whip up quick and easy dishes minus the hassle.

It's for those who love eating and are interested in cooking, but are intimidated with heavy kitchen work, are too busy, or inexperienced with cooking matters.

The end goal of the program is to show non-cooking people that whipping up a dish is not intimidating.

Watch Ryan as he demystifies the kitchen and comes up with impressive dishes that are easy to prepare and require

very minimal cooking time.

Adding more life to the show are the weekly celebrity guests who will inject fun and humor to Ryan's cooking and dining experience.

In some cases, these guests might also participate in the actual preparation.

If the guests are happy with the food, they get to give Ryan a kiss. If the guest is male, he invites a female celebrity to kiss Ryan.

Viewers will also be treated to Ryan's funny antics, humor and experimental nature in the kitchen.

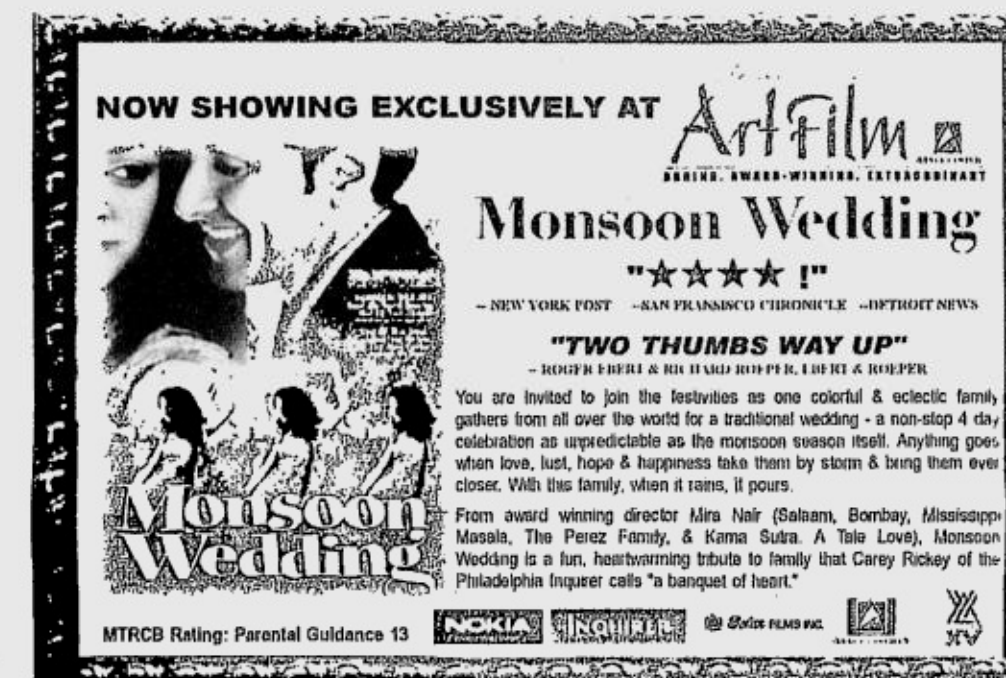
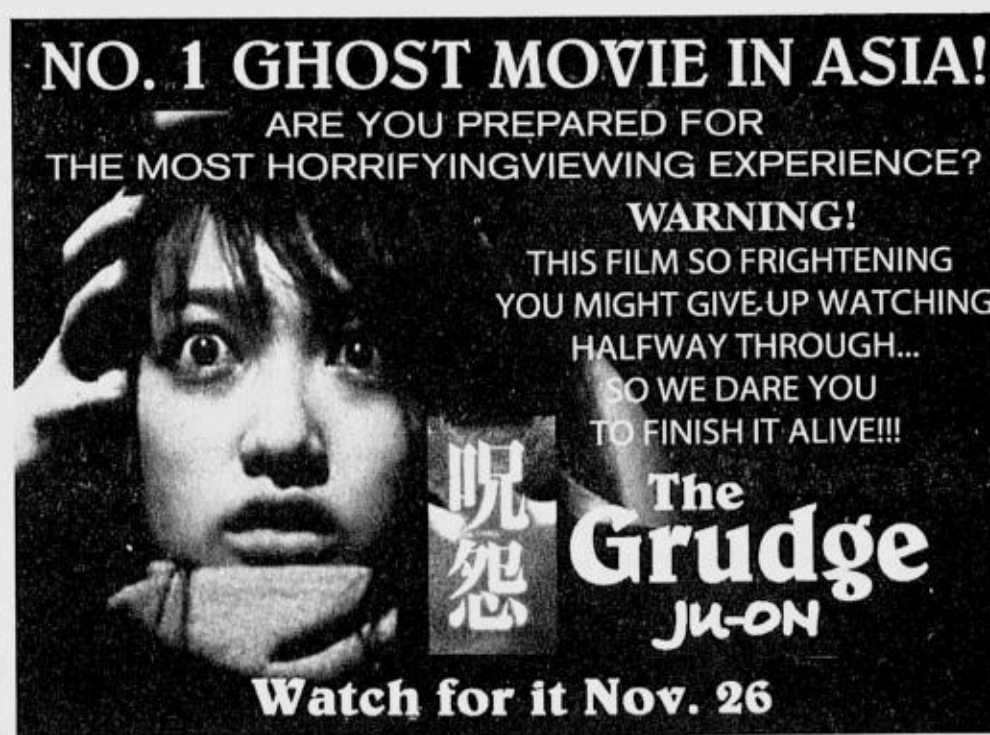
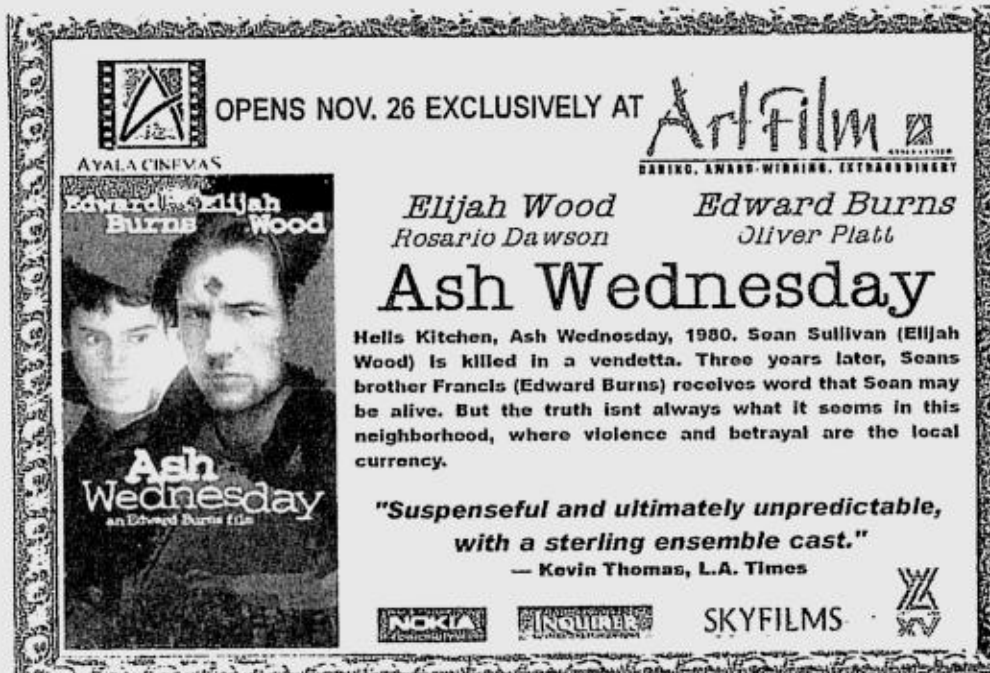
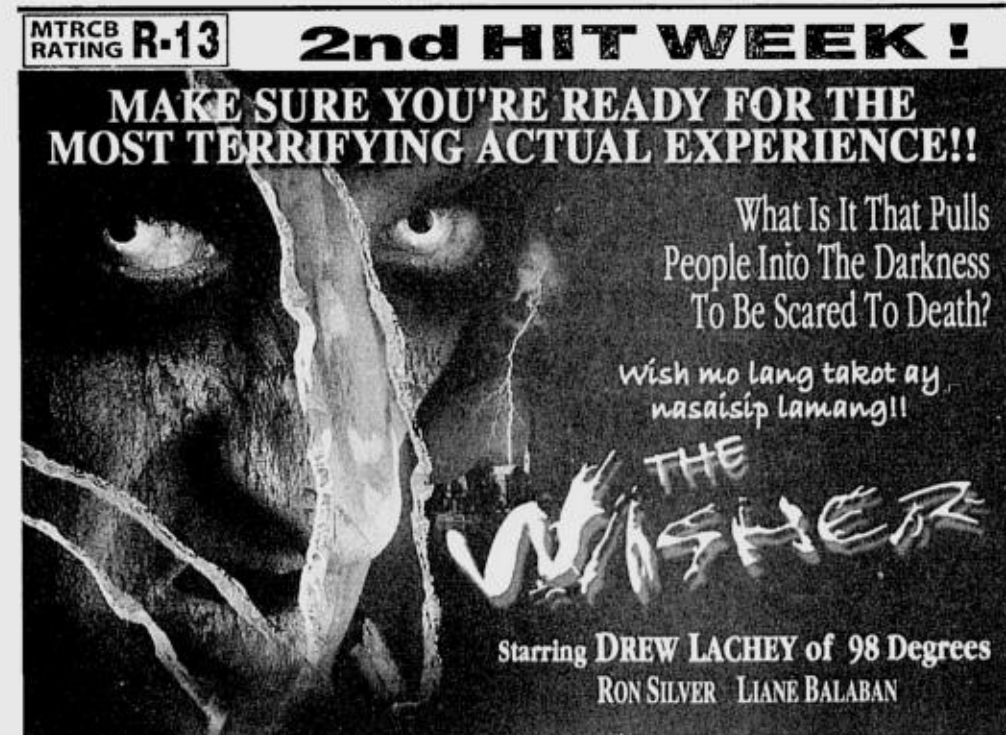
He will not project himself as an expert, but will be doing a lot of exploration and experimentation with his weekly recipes.

Fun, romance and even music are some of the ingredients in "Kiss the Cook."

The show will also be seen Sundays at 6 p.m. on the Lifestyle Channel.



AGONCILLO



Pet show on ABC 5

THE AMAZING world of pets and animals will be shown every Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. over Channel 5.

"Animal X" is produced by Visivo Productions Inc. in cooperation with Pit Fighter-Lakpue Drug.

The show has six segments: Angat Sa Lahat, features a winning game fowl bloodline and events and is hosted by Dr. Jose Baylon Linda, founder of Philippine Cocking School; The Vet Is In, offers valuable information on proper care and maintenance of animals and is hosted by veterinarian Dr. Ed Unson and Sam, a golden retriever; Pit Fighter Text-Tilaok, where viewers can ask questions on the featured game fowl topic of the week through text messaging; Star Pet Patrol, showcases different pet lovers, most of whom are show biz personalities; Trivia Atbp, and Hayop... Ang Galing, which features scientific breakthroughs in the care and development of animals for commercial purposes.

"Animal X" is hosted by former Mutya ng Pilipinas Darlene Cabungco.



CABUNGCO

Mariah, Mandy and Mom

I HAVE always been a music buff. Even my dreams seem to have their own soundtrack! My mom loved music too. She was a die-hard Elvis Presley fan. I remember her telling me that she was so disappointed when Elvis did not respond to the fan mail she had sent him during her high school days. But when she became a celebrity herself, she realized why it wasn't humanly possible to answer each and every letter from the fans.

So it's no surprise why my daughter Bianchi and my sister Clara turned out to be music fanatics too. Their vocabulary seems to be limited to only letters, and that's M.T.V.

I know my mom was as delighted as I was when Bianchi and Clara watched Mariah Carey's awesome concert at the Fort Last Sunday. They were even able to hobnob with the superstar diva at the exclusive party organized by the incomparable Tim Yap. But if my mom were around, she would not have allowed them to stay that late for the party. It was almost dawn when they got home, but the dreamy and dazed look on their faces erased whatever worries I had earlier.

When I asked them if they were able to have their pictures taken with Mariah, both said: "Who needs pictures? That night will forever be vivid in our memory!"

Bianchi and Clara still have a "Mariah hangover," but here comes another dream-come-true in the works. Both will be watching Mandy

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal



Moore's concert tonight—thanks to Arnold Vegafria.

I remember I was with my mom to look for the soundtrack of Mandy's hit movie "A Walk to Remember" because Clara was dying to have a copy, but it was always out of stock. Ma told me the film was simple but moving. She said she even cried while watching it. Ma will surely shed happy tears as she watches over Bianchi and Clara at Mandy's Big Dome show tonight.

Jessa Zaragoza...Reborn!

The huge success of "Jessa Zaragoza...Reborn" concert held at Ratsky on Tomas Morato, Quezon City last Oct 22 elicited favorable reactions from fans and music lovers who have clamored for a repeat performance.

In the concert, Jessa unraveled her versatility in singing. She interpreted songs of well-known divas such as Toni Braxton, Donna Summers and Shirley Bassey. She also rendered cuts from her latest album under Star Records, including her latest single "Sana Magbuhat pa Ng Una." Only four months after giving

birth to her son by husband Dingdong Avanzado, Jessa is back in her old form. She's even sexier and prettier than the time before she got pregnant.

Like what her guest performer Ogie Alcasid said, "Nanganak ba talaga ang babaing ito (Had this woman really just given birth)?"

Jessa surprised everyone when she delivered more than 18 songs, including duets with her guests, to a full-packed audience. She has transformed from a sexy actress to a more mature and sophisticated performer.

Catch the new Jessa on Nov 25 at the Hard Rock Café for a repeat performance of her Reborn concert. Some things are worth repeating, and Jessa's show is definitely one of them.

Aruba Nights

The music buff in me can't seem to be contained. Music is the most effective antidote when I get a severe case of the blues. Let me to entice you to check out the cool and funky music at my latest "hideaway," Aruba in Libis. When I'm in Aruba, I feel like I'm transported to another place and time where nothing can harm me. Let's all ariba to Aruba!

For feedback e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

Concert series against piracy

THE PHILIPPINE Association of the Records Industry will hold the concert series "Rated O" to raise awareness against record piracy and to urge record lovers to patronize only "original" records.

At the Alabang Town Center, acoustic sensations MYMP, King, Di-vo, Amee, Jay-R and Nina will perform on Nov. 28. Chart-busting bands Bridges, Gloc 9, Kamikazee, Barbie's Cradle, Slapshock and Moon Star will play their latest hits on Nov. 29. Soloists Sheng, Jed Maddela, Karylle, Josh Santana, the Akafellas, Jessa Zaragoza, Dingdong Avanzado, Marielle and Lani Misalucha will sing

original Pinoy pop music on Nov. 30. The Glorietta Mall will host the second leg of the concert series with 17:28, Paolo Santos and Jimmy Bon-doc joining King, Amee and Nina for the "Acoustic Night" on Dec. 12. Hot bands Bridges, Gloc 9, Kamikazee and Barbie's Cradle will share the stage with Southborder and True Faith on Dec. 13. The grand finale on Dec. 14 will see a stellar cast composed of Sheng, Jed Maddela, Josh Santana, Sarah Geronimo, Karylle, Jessa Zaragoza, Dingdong Avanzado, and Aiza Seguerra.

MTV VJs KC, Marc, Patty, and Cindy will host the concert series.

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WRITTEN BY RICHARD JEFFERIES. DIRECTED BY MIKE FIGGIS
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ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
Ali 1 MR. SUAVE
Ali 2 SEX SCANDAL
Ali 3 MASTER AND COMMANDER
Ali 4 MATRIX REVOLUTION
Ali 5 SCARY MOVIE 3
Ali 6 LIBERATED
Ali 7 WRONG TURN
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QUEZON CITY
ACT-1 SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2 KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3 ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4 HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
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CINEMA-5 (DTS) DARK BLUE
CINEMA-6 MAPANUKSO
CINEMA-7 RUNDOWN
CINEMA-8 LIBERATED
CINEMA-9 (DTS) MASTER AND COMMANDER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MASTER AND COMMANDER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS) SCARY MOVIE 3
CINEMA-12 MATRIX REVOLUTION
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(LAS PINAS) MATRIX REVOLUTION
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ENTERTAINMENT

Mariah staying till Sunday

By Marinel R. Cruz

INSTEAD of flying off to New York City last Tuesday, international pop diva Mariah Carey hied off to Amanpulo in Palawan.

Mariah, who held a one-night show at the Fort open field in Taguig, will stay in the exclusive resort until Sunday, according to Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) assistant general manager Angel Atutubo.

Mariah canceled her Singapore Airline flight to New York City on Nov. 17, but her 35-man entourage left Manila at 1 p.m. on that day via China Airlines, Atutubo told INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday.

She flew to Palawan onboard a private plane, and was accompanied only by her manager and two bodyguards, Atutubo added.

Amanpulo is on the private island of Pamalican, 200 km east of Palawan.

Guests from Manila are flown in to the island by a chartered plane, which lands directly on Pamalican.

The exclusive resort supposedly charges each guest between \$600 and \$1,000 per night.

"Owners of the place practice strict security," said Jofelle Tesorio, INQUIRER correspondent in Palawan.

"They will not welcome visitors who go to the island through private yachts. Guests have to be flown in by their own plane."

Only guests are allowed to roam around the resort, Tesorio said. Hired entertainers are restricted to their rooms, she added.

Hollywood personalities who had

visited the resort are ramp model Naomi Campbell and award-winning actors Robert de Niro and Tom Cruise.

Mariah performed in Manila for the first time last Sunday as part of her "Charmbracelet Tour 2003." Manila was the last leg of her six-city tour.

The singer will reportedly pass through another international airport when she returns to the United States on Sunday to avoid a repeat of an incident at the Naia Centennial Terminal when she arrived last Saturday.

The singer's body guards sent out of the Naia's presidential lounge airport general manager Edgardo Manda and other airport officials while the singer retouched her make-up.

"Our intention was just to give her VIP treatment," Manda said in an earlier interview with the airport press.

"It's part of our Filipino hospitality to make sure everything is okay and (ensure that celebrities) are welcome here in Manila."

Manda said that he instructed airport personnel not to give VIP treatment to Mariah and her entourage, which included back-up dancers, singers and band members, when they left Naia last Monday.

They joined the queue at the departure counter and personally checked in their baggage, Manda said.

Another American singer, Mandy Moore, arrived in Manila on Monday to perform today, at 8 p.m., at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City.



MARIAH checks out in world-class resort in Palawan before she leaves the country on Sunday.

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Tagalized "24" replaces telenovelas on ABS-CBN

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

BEFORE the innovative series "24" aired on the cable channel AXN, it was already being shown on RPN 9 as a weekly series starting June 2002.

But only 12 episodes saw the light of day, and these ran on a perpetual loop without the first season actually being finished.

For viewers who neither caught that or its current AXN broadcast because the channel vanished from certain cable providers, or for those who have not seen the show on DVD, the nail-biting first season will finally be shown on free TV in its entirety.

Starting last Monday, "24" was aired on a daily basis, weeknights at 8:30 p.m. on Channel 2. But there will be a major difference: It is dubbed in Filipino, like the Jennifer Garner-starrer hit action series "Alias" was when it debuted locally.

The show stars Kiefer Sutherland as Jack Bauer, head of a subdivision of the CIA, the CTU, or Counter-Terrorist Unit.

Bauer must protect a leading presidential candidate, African-American senator David Palmer (Dennis Haysbert) from a planned assassination attempt in California on election day. This plot might involve traitorous agents in his organization.

"24" is spread over 24 episodes, seen in "real-time," an hour each of Jack Bauer's most eventful day on the job yet. These 24 hours comprise one long subplot-filled story. Complications arise not only for him and the presidential hopeful, but also for his wife and teenage daughter, who get caught in the tangled web of dangerous events.

The Tagalized version was recently launched over a press lunch at ABS-CBN. Its pilot episode was unveiled, and in real-time fashion, the gaps between acts meant for commercials were filled with exclusive pre-recorded commentary from Sutherland, made especially for promo purposes.

Sutherland enjoys playing the flawed character, a husband who was trying to make his marriage work, and who has special duties to perform.

"I think all of us, to some degree, have issues of trying to balance our responsibilities for work and family, and to somehow find a happy median that is going to please both. It's a dilemma that I thought was interesting to play on," Sutherland said.



SUTHERLAND

The actor's career was revived with the groundbreaking series, which was among the best TV show category nominees of the Golden Globe Awards last year. He was also nominated as best actor in a television drama category and won the award.

"24" is currently on its 3rd season in the US.

Sutherland cites that the most challenging aspect in making "24" is trying to maintain a level of suspense over a long period of time: "Television is such a different beast from feature films in the sense that you're making the show. You try to feed off their feedback. And the one thing that the audience continues looking through was the suspenseful nature of the show."

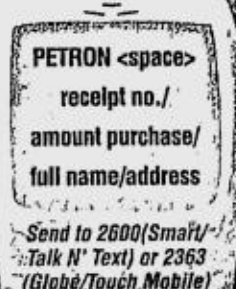
ABS-CBN's Cindy de Leon, vice president for creative communications, said the foreign series is a worthy and relatively unexpected temporary replacement for the time slot left by the telenovelas "Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay" and "Darating ang Umaga."

"To sort of replace them, we will be having this exciting show on weeknights, from November 17 to over half of December," De Leon said.

"24" has a new concept. It's got suspense and action that should appeal to fans of telenovelas. We're also trying to attract more male viewers during the block. It's also very relevant because the lead character practices strong family values, while being torn between them and his very difficult job," she added.

Vice president for program acquisition and marketing director of Studio 23, Leo Katigbak revealed that the voice talents chosen to dub the series were screened carefully to match the original cast members' voices. He said some of the voice talents were also tasked to translate the dialogue into Filipino.

BUSINESS



Execs see brighter prospects in '04

By Doris C. Dumlaog

MOST Philippine business leaders are "cautiously optimistic" that corporate earnings and economic performance will be much better in 2004 compared to this year, according to a business perception survey conducted by accounting firm C.L. Manabat & Co.-Deloitte.

In a presentation yesterday, CL Manabat partner Luz Bernardo said more than 75 percent of corporate leaders were optimistic in their outlook on the Philippine economy over a three-year scenario, while only 35 percent were positive on the current outlook.

Of the respondents, 75.38 percent said they were "cautiously optimistic" on the economy over the next three years while 9.23 percent consisted of those who were "decidedly optimistic."

On the other hand, 12.31 percent declared they were "cautiously pessimistic" while 1.54 percent claimed to be "decidedly pessimistic."

On the corporate side, more than 60 percent of the respondents said they expected their businesses to perform better next year compared to this year, while 55 percent were positive on the current corporate outlook.

Specifically, 16.39 percent said they were "decidedly optimistic"

on corporate prospects for next year while 68.85 percent said they were "cautiously optimistic." Some 14.75 percent was "cautiously pessimistic" while none claimed to be "decidedly pessimistic."

"Majority of business leaders in the Philippines are optimistic about the year 2004 and what it brings. In a three-year scenario, most business leaders expect that their corporations will perform exceedingly well and this may translate into progress and prosperity for the economy and the country," Bernardo said.

"Even in the current politically uncertain situation, most business leaders are optimistic in their business sentiment, while they remain cautiously pessimistic in their economic out-

look," she added.

The Philippines will hold its next presidential elections next year.

The business survey covered 70 respondents, 48 percent of which were chief executives, 28 percent chief finance officers, 9 percent other executive vice presidents and vice presidents, 8 percent board directors and 8 percent occupied other top posts.

The bulk of 75 percent of the respondents came from local corporations while 25 percent were from foreign enterprises.

By industry breakdown, the most bullish sectors were those from telecommunications, real estate, pharmaceutical and manufacturing while the least optimistic were in the construction

EXEC/B5

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P 55.345 = \$ 1

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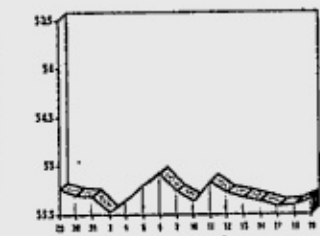
Y 108.08 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 19, 2003

GOLD: \$397.90-398.40

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 19, 2003

GRAPHS BY TERE CRUZ



OCTOBER NOVEMBER

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower on politics, weak regionals

STOCKS drifted lower yesterday, dampened by weak regional markets and local political as well as economic uncertainties, traders said.

Leading large capitalized stocks, including Ayala group firms, were among the key casualties as investors continued to trim holdings on worries about the economy ahead of elections.

"I think people are staying in cash right now because of the uncertainty on politics," said Nestor Aguila, chair of DA Market Securities.

The market is on tenterhooks over a possible announcement that popular local movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. may stand as the opposition candidate in next May's presidential election.

"We feel he doesn't have the experience to run the government. He's never held public office before," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp. Other local financial markets are also jittery over Poe's election plans.

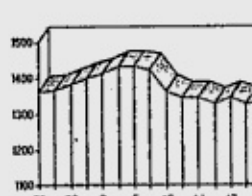
The main composite index ended down 9.73 points, or 0.73 percent, at 1,318.31 points, its weakest finish since Oct. 9 this year. The index has dipped for 10 of the past 11 trading sessions but is still up 29.45 percent this year.

Turnover was a moderate P511.94 million from P495.15 million on Tuesday.

"Technically we see 1,280 points as the next major support. We are entering the election phase and that is going to create ongoing uncertainty," Aguila said, adding that the market needed a period of correction to draw in fresh bargain hunters next year.

Reuters

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

THE COUNTRY'S import bill contracted for the second straight month—although at a slower annual pace of 4.5 percent—in September from 8.5 percent in August as manufacturers remained cautious in building up inventory due to domestic uncertainties.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported that the country's expenditures for foreign-made goods fell to \$3.05 billion from \$3.19 billion in the same month last year, weighed down by the decline in spending for raw materials and intermediate goods such as electronic inputs.

Importation of electronic products, which accounted for 47 percent of the total bill, fell by 5.9 percent to \$1.43 billion.

As semiconductors, the country's top export, use a lot of imported raw materials, a slow-

down in import spending is usually seen as an indicator of weak export performance in subsequent months. This year, export earnings have been sluggish despite the recovery in the global economy in recent months.

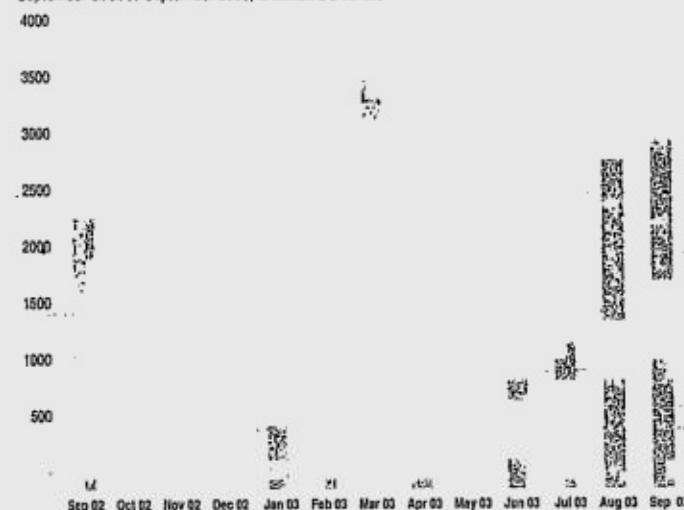
On the other hand, purchases of capital goods grew by 6.6 percent to \$1.3 billion, led by telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery.

Expenditures for minerals, lubricants and related materials inched up by 0.5 percent to \$297.23 million while payments for consumer goods declined by 17.2 percent to \$221.12 million from a year ago.

For the first nine months of the year, the country's imports went up by 4.8 percent to \$27.95 billion from a year ago, buoyed by the stock-piling of inventories

TOTAL IMPORTS

September 2002 to September 2003, in million US dollars



early in the year as producers tried to hedge against uncertainties from the Iraq war. Imports still edged out export earnings, which rose by a

IMPORTS/B5

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BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

we can actually invent a way to build a power plant in a jiffy, here come the "brownouts" again. Hep, hep...

RECENTLY, for lack of any other legitimate reason to drink, we (INQUIRER business section) had a roundtable discussion with top officials of the Aboitiz group.

Of course we talked about the power industry. The Cebu-based Aboitiz group went into the power business long before we were even born.

Were they happy with the power rates, as subsidized by order of this cute administration of Gloriaaeta, meaning, certain power plants were losing heavily?

Erramon Aboitiz, whose unique name is actually Basque for "Ramon," conceded that, to encourage new investments, we would have to adjust the rates.

But this executive in charge of the Aboitiz group's power business, could only see any adjustment forthcoming after the elections! See what I mean?

HOUSTON, we have a problem! For each day that we delay to make the necessary sacrifice today, we only prolong our future agony by a day.

And for each week of delay, we extend future brownouts by another week, and so on and so forth, until we just wake up one day, and we have a power crisis again.

Already, businesses in the Visayas and, in Mindanao are suffering from a worsening power failure. With grace from heaven, the brownouts in certain areas in the south are getting longer every day.

To the energy experts, therefore, it is not a question of when the rest of the country will experience similar brownouts, because the coming of the brownouts are already a certainty.

The only question is, at least to those in the know, how severe will the power shortage be about three or four years down the road.

For instance, will business establishments be forced to spend a fortune on power generators again, or will they just close down?

BUT of course Energy Secretary Vincent "the Silent" Perez is no longer mum, and he talks every single day about foreign investors, whose secret identity we have yet to uncover.

I hate to tell you this, but somebody must—Boss, talk is cheap! For the truth is, at this moment, not a single power plant is even in the planning stage.

And this cute administration of Gloriaaeta knows the real problem, and the real problem is, under this cute administration of Gloriaaeta, this country has become rough on the power sector.

Just take a look at the state owned monopoly Napocor. It is bleeding. I am pleased to report that, for this year alone, Napocor is starting at a P120-billion loss.

And everybody knows that a good part of the huge loss is due to the power "subsidy" which this cute administration imagines it can sustain, but hopefully only until the 2004 elections.

UNLIKE in the power crisis of the early 1990s, in which a lot of public officials struck gold, this time around Napocor cannot take the cudgels for us.

As I said, Napocor is bleeding. That's why, under the Epira, the law spelling out the power sector reforms, Napocor may no longer enter into contracts to buy the electricity from the private plants in the future.

The obvious question is, if anybody is crazy enough to invest in a power plant here, to whom does he sell the power. The Epira says that he sells to the private power distributors.

Those are the "Meralcos" in this country. Unfortunately, the finances of our power distributors, including some electric cooperatives, are nothing to crow about.

I am not sure that those unknown investors of Vincent the Silent, who have to sink hundreds of millions of dollars in a single power plant, cannot wait to enter into supply contracts with financially crippled distributors.

NOW I don't know how it began, but today we seem to enjoy this trip called big business bashing. Maybe it has something to do with "people power." It seems that we have turned into a nation of...well, "activists."

Even the Supreme Court is said to be going that way, although we grew up believing that, instead of being activists, the courts should try to stay more sober than a recovering alcoholic.

Not too long ago, for example, the Supreme Court ruled that the biggest power distributor here, that evil Meralco, cheated us. Well, it charged us things which other power companies in the world have also been charging their customers all along.

Thus the court ruled that the evil, wicked, malicious, criminal Meralco must, er, "refund" the, ah, "consumers" some P30 billion.

Nobody could figure out how much of it would be refunded to the malls, which already charged us for the electricity they used, and which of course could no longer be refunded to us. Beautiful!

ANYWAY, the same Meralco now suffers from poor finances. The international credit rating agency Standard and Poor, for instance, gives it a "CC" rating.

In finance, such a rating is the equivalent of Barreira about to get knocked down by Paquiao. It means the company is about to fail.

In the parlance of the money men, Meralco is showing signs of defaulting on its loans. Nobody in his right mind wants to touch it.

And word in banking is, unfortunately, Meralco needs to refinance its maturing loans this year. About P11 billion of them are falling due this December.

Bankers tell me that Meralco executives are trying to put up a brave face before the banks, boasting for instance that its profit can hit P700 million this year.

Yeah, sure, but the numbers say a different frightening story. Its books show that Meralco cannot even meet half of those P11 billion in maturing debts.

With its next-to-dead credit rating, it also cannot borrow fresh loans from banks just to pay off the maturing loans. And how can it convince the present creditors to agree to a debt rescheduling when everybody knows it is sinking?

AND I have a problem with that, because I know that if Meralco goes under, the Lopezes of this world will not suffer one least bit of inconvenience.

Even without Meralco, they will still be around, rich and famous, while we will suffer the forthcoming deterioration of the service in its area.

Believe me, that is going to be the result—we, the same "consumers," must take the brunt of all this...well, "activism."

Why? Because to make ends meet, as the banks hound it even in its sleep, Meralco must now cut spending for maintenance and upgrade. Uh-oh.

Nobody suffers but just the rest of us. Look, even computers do not exactly like power surging up and down, and all that mess. And those things are sure to happen, because Meralco does not invest in new facilities.

And so here is the big picture: We are going have power shortage, that's one, and for another treat, whatever power we get, well, has inferior quality, because it's like we are getting power service through the peephole or something. Nice, no!

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, November 19, 2003)

STOCKS

OPEN HIGH LOW CLOSE VOLUME

BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bank of the Philippines 3.9 3.9 3.9 3.9 7,000

Bank of the Philippine Islands 17 17 17 17 46,500

China Banking Corp. 42.5 42.5 42 42.5 431,400

Equitable PCI Bank Inc. 660 660 660 660 450

Export and Ind. Bank Inc. 34.5 34.5 34.5 34.5 300

First E-Bank Corp. 0.64 0.64 0.6 0.6 610,000

Metropolitan Bank & Trust 0.5 0.5 0.5 0.5 30,000

Philippine National Bank 26 26.5 26.5 26 191,100

Phil. Savings Bank 24 24 24 24 5,000

Rizal Comm. Banking Corp. 28.5 28.5 28.5 28.5 5,000

Security Bank Corp. 12.75 12.75 12.75 12.75 2,400

Union Bank of the Phil. 17.25 17.25 17 17.25 5,800

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Air Kim Eng Fin. Corp. 2.2 2.2 1.92 2.2 40,000

Bankard Inc. 1.22 1.22 1.22 1.22 1,000

Bankwide Financial Corp. 1640 1640 1640 1640 20

PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc. 1.32 1.32 1.32 1.32 250,000

Sun Life Financial Inc. 1330 1330 1330 1330 280

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. 25.5 25.5 25.5 25.5 11,500

Digital Telecom Phils. Inc. 6800 6800 6800 6800 1,300,000

Globe Telecom Inc. 775 775 760 770 113,360

Ipelec Inc. 0.93 0.93 0.93 0.93 80,000

ISM Communications Corp. 0.041 0.041 0.04 0.041 1,200,000

Philippine Tel. Corp. 0.84 0.85 0.84 0.85 2,560,000

Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co. 0.2 0.2 0.18 0.18 40,000

Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. 730 740 725 725 80,270

Int'l Container Term'l Sv 0.38 0.38 0.38 0.38 80,000

William, Gothong & Aboitiz 0.012 0.012 0.011 0.012 5,600,000

POWER & ENERGY

Manila Electric Co. A 13.5 13.75 13.5 13.5 162,800

Manila Electric Co. B 19.5 20.25 19.5 20 281,400

Patron Corp. 2.02 2.02 2 2.02 232,000

Salcom Power Corp. 2.02 2.02 2 2.02 118,000

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Int'l Container Term'l Sv 3.2 3 2.3 2.3 222,000

William, Gothong & Aboitiz 2.5 2.5 2.5 2.5 20,000

CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS

Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. 1.54 1.54 1.54 1.54 50,000

Union Cement Corp. 1.08 1.08 1.02 1.02 140,000

FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO

Alaska Milk Corp. 3.15 3.15 3.15 3.15 15,000

Cosmos Bottling Corp. 3.9 3.9 3.9 3.9 31,000

Jollibee Foods Corp. 17 17 16.75 16.75 1,200

Swift Food Inc. 0.26 0.26 0.26 0.26 640,000

San Miguel Corp. A 54 54 55 54.5 43,500

San Miguel Corp. B 60 6 0.6 0.60 2,251,300

Universal Robina Corp. 5.6 5.6 5.6 5.6 1,000

Vitarich Corp. 0.27 0.27 0.27 0.27 200,000

HOLDING FIRMS

Ayala Corp. 4.9 4.9 4.85 4.85 15,136,000

Aboitiz Equity Ventures 3.1 3.1 3.1 3.1 18,000

A. Soriano Corp. 0.76 0.76 0.76 0.76 10,000

ATN Holdings Inc. 1.68 1.68 1.68 1.68 90,000

Benpres Holdings Corp. 0.45 0.4 5.4 3.43 10,650,000

Basic Consolidated Inc. 0.1 1 1.1 590,000

Crown Equities Inc. 0.21 0.2 1.20 5.205 1,400,000

Southeast Asian Cement 0.045 0.04 5.04 5.045 100,000

First Phil Hldgs. Corp. 17.2 5.17 5.17 25.17 231,700

Global Equities Inc. 0.07 0 07.06 75.0675 1,000,000

Ionics Inc. 1.5 0.1 5.1 5.15 35,000

J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. 2 4.2 0.42 0.4204 50,000

Macro Asia Corp. 0.58 0 58 58 10,000

Megaworld Corp. 0.28 0.21 2 2 1,350,000

Metro Pacific Corp. 0.41 0 41 36.36 1,460,000

Music Corp. 0.16 0 16 16.16 230,000

Prime Orion Phils. Inc. 0.32 0 32 3.3 400,000

Solid Group Inc. 0.09 0 09 09.09 400,000

Unilwide Holdings Inc. 0.98 0 1 98.1 20,000

MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING

Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. 0.057 5.05 75.05 75.0575 800,000

Picop Resources Inc. 13 75.13 75.13 75.1375 20,000

SPI Technologies Inc. 0.13 0 13 13.13 510,000

STANIL Manufacturing

HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES

Belle Corp. 0.54 0 54 53.54 920,000

Acesite Phils Hotel Corp. 0.25 2.1 1.1 1.1 140,000

Fairmont Holdings Inc. 0.12 0 12 25 650,000

Leisure & Resorts Corp. 0.39 0 39 39.39 2,010,000

Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. 0.26 0 26 25.25 140,000

BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS

Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) 25.5 0.25 0.5 25.25 149,400

PLDT (10% Pdr) Series W 10.5 0.10 5.10 5.10.5 200

PROPERTY

Ayala Land Inc. 5.9 0.5 9.5 8.8 9,095,000

Cityland Development Corp. 1 90 1.9 1.9 1,000

Cyber Bay Corp. 0.115 0.1 15.1 15.115 990,000

Empire East Land Inc. 0.22 50 225 225.225 200,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1 41 0.41 0.41 2,166,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.18 0 0.18 0.18 400,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.09 0 0.09 0.09 20,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1 82 1 82 3,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1 0.08 1 0.08 8,205,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 6 40 6.4 6.4 4,859,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.23 0 23 23.23 4,260,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.31 0 31 31.31 12,140,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0 80 0.80 0.80 34,000,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.008 5.00 5.00 5.00 24,000,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.34 0 34 34.36 6,230,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.37 0 37 37.41 8,340,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.01 10 0.11 0.11 500,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0 32 0 32 24,000,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 0.01 80 0.08 0.08 1,000,000

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1.626,850 26,024,500 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 56,947,930 388,559,840 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 17,959,000 86,282,010 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 88,970,000 10,896,050 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 25,200,000 94,900 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 190,703,780 511,857,300 00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 419.12 DOWN 0.59

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1,965.02 DOWN 10.95

Fillinvest Land Inc. 551.33 DOWN 13.80

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1,683.53 UP 67.41

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1.38 UNCH 0.00

Fillinvest Land Inc. 825.20 DOWN 3.22

Fillinvest Land Inc. 1,318.31 DOWN 9.73

Fillinvest Land Inc. NO. OF ADVANCES: 14; NO. OF DECLINES: 38; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 93;

Fillinvest Land Inc. NO. OF TRADES: 1,343

DISCLOSURES

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. recently bought a total of 469,000 of its own shares at P1.32 per share.

PHILIPPINE National Bank clarified that its application for a lower tier-2 capital is still pending in Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

REDEMPTION of Swift Foods Inc.'s preferred shares will be until December 31, 2003. Shares will be redeemed at P10 per share and can be redeemed by submitting to the company's corporate secretary the duly endorsed stock certificate.

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank clarified that it is not in discussion to buy a stake in Philippine Bank of Communications. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

November 19, 2003	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.835980605	1.000000	55.435000
Japan	Yen	0.007738	0.009256	0.513100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.423842	1.703200	94.169000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.107797	0.128947	7.146200
Switzerland	Franc	0.646343	0.773156	42.859000
Canada	Dollar	0.644004	0.770357	42.704700

DESPITE PESO WEAKNESS BSP to keep rates steady

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is likely to keep its overnight rates steady at 6.75 percent for borrowing and 9 percent for lending in its meeting today.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said monetary authorities were not inclined to touch key policy rates either way despite the continued volatility of the peso and a lingering weakness of the economy under a fairly low interest rate regime.

The central bank governor earlier feared that a budget deficit blowout this year might force the Monetary Board to raise interest rates.

But the government's announcement yesterday that it kept the October deficit slightly below the P22.7-billion ceiling in October had put the fiscal program back on track with the full-year deficit target of P202 billion.

The central bank's policy rates and the 91-day treasury bill rate are benchmarks used by banks in pricing their loans. These are tools used to stimulate the economy.

"There is no compelling reason to change (overnight rates). The weakness of the peso is not driven by interest rates," Buenaventura said at the

sidelines of the 9th conference on Good Government and Responsible Citizenship yesterday.

The BSP chief said the peso "was fairly stable" given the volatile political environment. The peso yesterday closed at 55.345 to a dollar from 55.405 on Tuesday.

The central bank is also counting on the inflow of overseas workers' remittances to boost the supply of dollars in the market especially during the Christmas season. The BSP is expecting Filipinos abroad to send about \$7.7 billion to their families this year, up from almost \$7.2 billion in 2002.

Buenaventura said export receipts should also pick up toward year's end.

"The idea, especially during an election period, is to keep interest rates and exchange rates as stable as they can be. If rates in the United States go up next year, our flexibility may allow us to keep rates where they are now," the BSP chief said earlier.

Questions were being raised why the policy-making Monetary Board has not

reduced its policy rates to spur growth in a slow-moving economy when the inflation rate had remained subdued and way below the BSP's target of 4.5-5.5 percent this year and 4-5 percent in 2004.

In an environment of inflation-targeting that the BSP had adopted starting 2002, monetary policies must be pursued with the inflation target as the main consideration. So far, inflation, or the rate of increase in the prices of goods and services, had averaged at about 3 percent this year.

But economic growth had been below target in the second quarter although authorities were expecting to meet the low end of the 4.2-5.2 percent growth in gross domestic product during the second half.

Buenaventura said he saw no further need to cut the central bank's overnight rates because there remained sufficient liquidity in the system to fuel the desired level of growth.

A 25-basis-point cut in overnight rates last July 2 was the only time the BSP had cut rates this year after tightening policies in March when it raised the reserve requirement by a percentage point and scrapped a tiering scheme that paid a decreasing rate on bank deposits with the BSP.

Napocor to bid coal supply deals worth P2.16B on Nov. 25, Dec. 2

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Power Corp. is auctioning off on Nov. 25 and Dec. 2 coal supply contracts worth P39.32 million or about P2.16 billion, which represent a \$7.36-million (P405 million) increase in the budget cap.

Up for bidding are three contracts to deliver a total of 975,000 metric tons of coal for the 1,200-megawatt Sual plant in Pangasinan, 600-MW Masinloc plant in Zambales and 735-MW Pagbilao plant in Quezon.

A contract provides for

325,000 metric tons of coal for each power plant.

The auctions were originally set for Oct. 21 and Oct. 22, but Napocor postponed to give way to a team sent to China to appraise the shipping and production situations in the region.

In particular, the China mission investigated how the current shortage in supply and available cargo ships could affect Napocor's coal procurement.

In an interview, a Napocor official said the price ceiling for each contract was raised considering the higher costs

due to the shortages.

For each of the Sual and Masinloc contracts, Napocor raised the budget to P13.65 million (about P751 million) from \$10.9 million (about P600 million).

The budget for the Pagbilao contract was raised to \$12.02 million (P661 million) from \$10.15 million (P558 million).

The worldwide shortage in sea-faring haulers hit Napocor such that one supplier had asked for an increase in freight payments for previously committed cargoes by about P175 million.

Abaca use in German car panels studied

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINE abaca, the country's first agriculture export, could again regain its prominence in the international market as German automakers are testing its strength and compatibility with their vehicles.

Automakers from Germany are experimenting on Philippine abaca fiber and how it could be used in their vehicles' inner and composite panels.

Officials of the Fiber Industry Development Authority (Fida) said in an interview that acquiring these contracts would be the big break that the abaca fiber industry was looking for in the last 15 years and this could uplift the abaca industry as a whole.

"We cannot divulge the names of these firms. Now we are working on how we could guarantee that we could supply their volume requirements," said Fida Administrator Cecilia Gloria Soriano.

She noted that Fida had been

doing extensive research on the alternative uses of abaca other than for paper or cordage manufacturing.

This year the country's abaca production has risen by 19.8 percent to 57,000 metric tons in the first nine months of the year from 47,570 MT in the same period in 2002.

Abaca exports to the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Singapore have risen to 6,613 MT from January to August this year from 4,717 MT delivered in the same period last year.

Soriano said the industry's production has not peaked as it has yet to recover from diseases such as the abaca bunchy top and the bract mosaic because there was not enough funds from the government to buy insecticides and other herbicides.

"The government needs to solve this problem with the private sector," she said. "The P120 million funding requirement has not been released to us."

Toyota expands production facility in Laguna ecozone

TOYOTA Motor Philippines Corp. (TMP) has expanded its manufacturing facility in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, signaling the company's commitment to increase its export capacity and thus help boost the country's automotive industry.

TMP said in a statement that it has expanded its plant, which is situated at the Special Economic Zone, from 25 hectares to 77 hectares.

"The expansion reinforces our commitment to establish the

He said, local parts suppliers have become more competitive in terms of product quality, workmanship and technical expertise, thereby making the Philippines a preferred site for sourcing automotive parts.

"The Toyota Special Economic Zone will increase our export capacity, generate employment and produce world-class and highly skilled workers we all can be proud of," added Tabata.

Michelle V. Remo

AUCTION SALE

GOLDWELL PROPERTIES & RESOURCES, INC. and EQUITY HOMES, INC. offer for sale through sealed bidding the following properties on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis with their minimum bid prices.

Savvy 25, Sucat, Parañaque City				11 Residential Lots			
Blk 1 Lot 1	(Givenchy St.)	246 sqm	P 738,000	Blk 1 Lot 1	(Jose Plo St.)	354 sqm	P 1,062,000
Blk 1 Lot 3	(Jose Plo St.)	354 sqm	P 360,000	Blk 1 Lot 4-B	(Jose Plo St.)	120 sqm	P 342,000
Blk 2 Lot 13-B	(Worth St.)	114 sqm	P 540,000	Blk 8 Lot 2	(Lauren St.)	180 sqm	P 540,000
Blk 8 Lot 2	(Lauren St.)	180 sqm	P 540,000	Blk 8 Lot 3	(Lauren St.)	180 sqm	P 540,000
Blk 8 Lot 5-B	(Lauren St.)	90 sqm	P 270,000	Blk 10 Lot 10	(Lauren cor. Allage Sts)	341 sqm	P 852,500
Blk 10 Lot 10	(Lauren cor. Allage Sts)	341 sqm	P 852,500	Blk 10 Lot 11	(Allage St.)	268 sqm	P 670,000
Blk 10 Lot 12-B	(Allage Dr.)	103 sqm	P 257,500	Blk 12 Lot 20	(Antonio Benito Ave.)	262 sqm	P 851,000
Savvy 25, Sucat, P'que House/Lot LA: 170 sqm	FA: 160 sqm						
4BR/4TB 2-car gar P 2,500,000				Equity Homes, Daang Hari (Molino, Bacoor, Cavite)			
24 Res lots ranging 63 to 126 sqm P 152,000 to P 315,500				Sanchez St. across Robinson's Imus 10 res/com'l. Lots			
Aguinaldo Highway, Imus, Cavite 54 sqm ea @ P 162,000 ea				Rodeo Hills, Tagaytay City Vacant res/com'l lot			
With frontage along highway 480 sqm P 1,440,000							

The above properties will be sold through SEALED BIDDING to the highest bidder during an auction sale on Nov. 24, 2003, 1-3p.m., at the MANILA PENINSULA Hotel Business Center, GF, Ayala, Makati City

Bidders should bring P5,000 cash or MC with their SEALED BIDS. Upon approval of a bid, bidders should not withdraw their bid. For details, 834-6840 to 41 or 0927-3300-532

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Oil imports up 26% in 1st 8 months

WORLD BANK ECONOMIST Decision to hike tariffs bucked

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY'S net petroleum imports for the first eight months of 2003 went up by 26.12 percent to \$2.39 billion from \$1.89 billion in the same period last year.

Data gathered by the INQUIRER showed that 78.06 million barrels of crude oil and refined petroleum products were brought in from January to August this year.

This was a 4.55-percent increase in volume from 74.66 million barrels in the comparative period of 2002.

From January to August, the country imported 66.4 million barrels of crude and 23.35 million barrels of refined products.

Eight-month crude imports saw an 8.44-percent increase

from 61.24 million barrels in 2002 while product imports fell by three percent from 24.07 million barrels a year ago.

Exports of products jumped 32 percent to 11.6 million barrels from 8.77 million barrels as local refiners expanded their overseas market in a bid to jack up profits.

The country was able to export about 1.9 million barrels of crude last year from the Malampaya oil reserve.

In September, the Department of Energy said net imports rose in the first five months due to a government requirement for local oil companies to maintain minimum inventory levels, which aimed to cushion the impact of the US-led war against Iraq on local prices and supply.

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE WORLD Bank's lead economist for the Philippines yesterday said the government's move to raise tariffs on imported finished products was "not in the best interest" of the country in meeting economic objectives.

"The Philippines needs to be competitive and productive and for this it needs to integrate," Lloyd McKay said in a speech before an audience composed of government officials and corporate directors at the ninth Conference Series on Good Governance and Responsible Citizenship organized by the Institute of Corporate Directors.

In an interview after the speech, McKay explained that the global experience has been that by increasing trade through lower tariffs, a country increases its economic competitiveness.

In the case of the Philippines, he said, the reduction in tariffs over the past 15 years had

been instrumental in driving the tremendous increase in exports over the period.

In mid-October, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo issued EO 241 raising tariffs on imported finished goods back to the 1998 level. This drew flak from many quarters.

Political economist Calixto Chikiamco said that by issuing the EO, the Arroyo administration has taken two steps backward in reforming the economy.

The Foundation for Economic Freedom, which counts the backing of three former economic planning secretaries and two former tariff commissioners, cited several points against the EO.

The foundation noted that the increase in tariffs would not significantly increase government revenue because it retained low tariffs on imported inputs and therefore, industries would concentrate on importing raw materials.

The higher tariffs on imported finished goods would raise prices for consumers and

penalize a vast range of productive activities. An example of the latter is higher prices of truck refrigerated vans and motorcycles and this would punish the country's transport sector.

FEF president Alex Magno noted: "Since 1991, the value of our exports grew four-folds and reached \$34 billion in 2002. This translates into hundreds of thousands of quality jobs in exporting industries. Lowering tariff rates and liberalizing trade was even more meaningful to consumers since it brought down the cost of consumer durables."

According to Chikiamco, the EO 241 was nothing more than an act to bestow "economic rent" or unearned profit to certain favored, and politically powerful businessmen.

"It is highly likely that the response of these favored, protected industries is to increase prices, fattening their bottom line without adding any value to the consumer," he said.

Our sourcing firm to buy Indian unit for P220M

By Doris C. Dumlaog

PUBLICLY listed SPI Technologies Inc., Asia's leading business process outsourcing firm, has signed a deal to acquire 100 percent of an India-based service provider for about P220 million (\$4 million).

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SPI president and chief executive officer Ernest Cu said the acquisition marked the Philippine IT service exporter's entry to India and was a "strategic fit to its strategy of building a global organization with multi-country service delivery platforms."

"The combined operational and marketing capabilities of Kolam and SPI Publisher Services are expected to contribute to the company's profitability moving forward," Cu added.

For its current fiscal year, SPI expects Kolam to contribute annual revenue of approximately \$3.5 million, complementing the existing earnings of its book and journal production services unit. The deal is expected to take effect within the first half of 2004.

Based in Pondicherry, India, Kolam is a significant full service supplier to leading scholarly and professional book publishers, including Elsevier, Blackwell, Oxford, University Press, Macmillan and John Wiley & Sons. This company has plans to expand to Europe.

Its capabilities include a wide array of design, project management, editorial and production functions. Its resources include a substantial "on-shore" project management capability in St. Louis, USA, as well as three production facilities with 300 employees in India.

Frank Stumpf, president of SPI Publisher Services, said with the acquisition of Kolam, this SPI unit was now in a position to offer maximum flexibility in terms of onshore and offshore resources.

"The Kolam acquisition strengthens our execution of the strategy in the book market due to the robustness of both its onshore and offshore capabilities," Stumpf said.

Manila Water allots P15B to replace pipes

By Christine A. Gaylan

EAST zone concessionaire Manila Water Co. Inc. has earmarked P15 billion over the next 10 years to replace old pipes that could be sources of unsafe drinking water.

The Ayala-led water concessionaire that has taken over the century-old system formerly managed by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System is spending more than P2.6 billion to replace about 300 kilometers of aging pipeline and lay an additional 100 kilometers of pipes this year.

Manila Water president Antonino T. Aquino said yesterday that this was the company's effort to curb its non-revenue water that were primarily due to illegal connections.

He noted that its NRW projects, wastewater and sewerage expansion ate a third of MWC's capital investments, which are financed through internally generated funds and loans.

Aquino noted that cutting off illegal connections was only half the battle in the water service business.

"The other half requires the company to make a big effort to prioritize your capital expenditure program and make no excuses of replacing everything that needs to be replaced from obsolete asbestos concrete, cast iron pipes to corroded service connections," Aquino said.

He stressed that this was the only way to curb systems losses and actually convert these into billed volumes.

"The urban poor households constitute 78 percent of the Manila Water's customer base of 4.8 million Manila residents. They also have an average consumption of 30 cubic meters a month," Aquino said.

Aquino, however, appealed to urban poor residents to guard their water connections from illegal connections.

A response to the

Open Letter of Kalayaan Foundation from the Government Service Insurance System

November 19, 2003

To our Dear Members:

Please allow us to answer the accusations contained in a paid ad in today's (Nov.19, 2003) Issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer captioned as an Open Letter to Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

The numbers to my answers correspond to the numbered accusations in the open letter:

1. The GSIS has something like P15B collectible in loan arrearages of members. To address this problem, we adopted the Claims and Loans Interdependency Policy. Under this Policy, loan arrearages of members in other loan windows of the GSIS are deducted from the proceeds of a new loan under another window. This way, the GSIS is able to effectively collect on member's arrears. At the same time, members benefit from the Policy because their loan with the GSIS is put at current status thus avoiding the incurrence of interests and surcharges.

The integration of the Policy in our computer systems and the required updating of records for the effective implementation of the Policy necessitated the suspension of loans processing in May. We however resumed full blast loan operations last August 15.

Any reform that will require drastic administrative and technical adjustments will definitely inconvenience a sector of the membership. We will not be relegated into inaction and stagnation by the fear of being reprimanded.

2. The GSIS is a System. As such it is composed of parts which have functions that are interrelated and interdependent. The member is the first part of the System whose function is to pay the employee's contributions. The second part is the Government Agency whose functions are to pay the employer's contribution and remit both shares to the GSIS. The third part is the GSIS whose function is to pay benefits after the member and the agency have done their functions. If anyone of these parts of the system fails, the entire system will not survive.

3. The Joint Bidding Committee handling the bidding requirement of NAPOCOR is chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Finance. The members of the committee are the Secretary of Energy, the President of NAPOCOR, and the President and General Manager of the GSIS. For the year in question, the lowest bid received by the committee was \$25.2 M. Since the lowest bid exceeded the budgeted cost of NAPOCOR the committee declared a failure of bidding. In view of the failure of bidding, GSIS proposed a \$14.2 M premium which the committee accepted. This premium is \$11M less than the lowest bid of \$25.2M. While this premium is lower by \$11M, the Policy nevertheless afforded a provision which reduced the loss deductible from proceeds by 50%, a clear advantage to NAPOCOR. Of this \$14.2M premium, 70% or \$9.94M was retained by the GSIS as premium income of the System and the rest were reinsured locally thus saving on dollar outflow. This is in stark contrast to the previous practice of retaining only 10% for GSIS and reinsuring the rest or 90% with foreign reinsurers requiring foreign exchange remittance. It is not true that machinery breakdown is not included in the Policy issued by the GSIS.

4. I disapproved the proposed contract regarding the issuance of a GSIS "smart ID Cards." No such project ever materialized. As President and General Manager of the GSIS, I am not a member of the GSIS Family Bank Board. The top executives of the Bank are appointed by the GSIS Board of Trustees and not the GSIS President and General Manager. As such, it is impossible for the GSIS President and General Manager to have such authority and influence as implied in the open letter.

5. Engineer Estelo C. Tumblod, Structural Engineer of the ECT Consulting Engineers, wrote in his own handwriting to Engr. Divina Apolinar of the GSIS that "the granite tiles as described here (referring to the granite tiles that were installed) is structurally approved for use in the GSIS flooring. It is noted that the additional weight is only 4.55 PSF which is very much less than the allowable extra load which can be accommodated. . ."

The installation of the granite tiles was approved by the GSIS Board since the 15 year old carpets that were installed on the floors were already posing health risks to the employees and visitors.

Maintenance wise, the granite tiles are more economical in the long run.

6. Expenses incurred for the upgrading of the mainframe system is less than a hundred million and not P700 M as irresponsibly claimed in the open letter. This expense is on a lease to own arrangement. The upgrading of the mainframe system was unavoidable as the computerization requirements of the premium based and claims and loans interdependency programs called for such upgrading.

7. The cases of Attys. Molina and Velasco are better left to administrative and court processes. They, however, have all the right to defend themselves against the charges they are facing. Reacting to the open letter, lawyers Molina and Velasco have approached me to offer their hands in reconciliation with management.

8. The Financial Statements of the GSIS for the years 2001 and 2002 have been passed in audit by the Commission on Audit. For the first time in GSIS history, the GSIS financial statements were given a Clean findings by the Commission. Two consecutive years of Clean findings is another first in GSIS history.

Behind all these allegations, there is one fact that is not mentioned: that a lot of people suffered personal financial losses due to my Policy on Premium Retention in the non-life insurance business of the GSIS. A lot of people have lost and still stand to lose hundreds of millions of pesos in reinsurance premiums and commissions due to my Policy of retaining for the GSIS at least 70% of insurance premiums received, including the NAPOCOR account. These financial losses of these personalities are the financial gains of the GSIS. Incidentally, the NAPOCOR account is up for renewal this coming January, 2004. It is obvious that the open letter to the President is related to that renewal. It will indeed be very convenient for the people concerned if I were out of the way by the time the renewal is up.

Thank you very much.

WINSTON F. GARCIA

US, Latin American nations to talk on trade pacts

MIAMI—With prospects for an Americas-wide free-trade pact up in the air, the United States pushed ahead on Tuesday with plans for more comprehensive agreements with individual countries in the region.

As trade officials from 34 countries—all of the Western Hemisphere except Cuba—continued debating how to structure the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement, US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick announced plans to begin trade talks with the Andean nations of

Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, as well as Panama.

Zoellick said he expected negotiations with Colombia and Peru to begin in the second quarter of next year. Formal talks with Bolivia and Ecuador would begin at a later date.

The four countries now get duty-free access to the US market for a wide range of their exports under legislation aimed at fighting drug production in the Andean region.

Those preferences expire in 2006 and the Andean nations have been eager for a free-trade

pact to lock them in.

Zoellick said the Andean trade talks would build momentum for the FTAA, which has been dogged by a disagreement between Brazil and the United States over what should be in the pact.

"The United States is deeply committed to creating a hemispheric marketplace through a comprehensive ALCA," he said, using the Spanish acronym for the Americas-wide pact.

Oxfam International, which campaigns against global poverty, said Washington's ravenous

appetite for smaller, bilateral agreements where it can more easily dictate terms would hurt economic development in the Americas and jeopardize poor people's access to affordable medicine.

The United States hopes to complete a free-trade pact with five Central American countries this year and to begin talks with the Dominican Republic early in 2004. The talks with Panama would start in the spring.

Until recently, the United States and Brazil had been at

odds over the scope of the FTAA, with the United States supporting a much more comprehensive agreement covering areas such as services, patent and copyright protections, investment and government procurement in addition to tariff cuts.

But a "vision" statement crafted by Zoellick and Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim as part of a draft declaration for this week's FTAA meeting in Miami appears to lean heavily toward Brazil's position by allowing countries to opt out of certain

parts of the agreement.

That has upset countries like Canada, Chile and Mexico, which already have comprehensive free-trade agreements with the United States and want all countries in the hemisphere to be required to play by the same rules.

Sebastien Theberge, a spokesman for the Canadian Trade Ministry, said Canada was "working with other countries on an architecture that would promote predictability" in the negotiations by more clearly defining the scope of the agreement. *Reuters*

Chinese economic growth to remain at 8%, IMF says

WASHINGTON—China's surging economy is expected to show growth of 8.5 percent this year and continue at an eight percent pace in 2004, the International Monetary Fund said Tuesday.

In a report following annual consultations, the IMF said China should consider reforms to shore up its banking system and improve its social safety net, but otherwise praised Beijing for keeping its economy on track.

Weighing in on a controversial topic, the IMF said there was no hard evidence the Chinese currency, known as the yuan or renminbi, is undervalued, as the United States and some economists argue.

But the IMF said a more flexible exchange rate, as sought by Washington, "would be in the best interest of China."

The IMF said China's economy has withstood the shocks of the SARS epidemic and held above 7.5 percent in recent years.

"Over the last few years, China has maintained its strong growth momentum and continued its rapid integration into the global economy," the report said.

"Despite the difficult world economic environment and domestic uncertainties, China's GDP growth has remained above 7.5 percent in recent years, supported by appropriate macroeconomic policies and structural reforms."

Execs see ...

From page B1

and education sectors.

Utilities, trading as well as banking and finance were noted to be generally optimistic while sectors like logistics and services indicated a split in sentiment between optimism and pessimism.

Meanwhile, a majority of the survey respondents identified the current peace and order situation, high corruption levels and political uncertainties as the biggest barriers to economic growth while the relatively low cost of doing business, low interest rates and rising global demand were seen as the biggest drivers to corporate growth.

CL Manabat chair Conchita Manabat aired concern over the "over-amplification," particularly by the media, of negative information. She said this was creating a negative "self-fulfilling prophecy."

She challenged business leaders to "control the destiny of the country, or someone else will" and urged them to "return to optimism."

Philippine Confederation of Exporters president Sergio Ortiz-Luis, a panelist during the forum yesterday said: "In reality, we are not doing so bad. Even at the height of the Asian crisis, exports were growing very fast."

Employers Confederation of the Philippines president Donald Dee, on the other hand, said it was difficult to even be cautiously optimistic but he was nevertheless optimistic for next year.

"We can't sweep problems under the rug," he said, noting for instance that rapid population growth should be recognized as another serious challenge for the country.

Imports fell ...

From page B1

marginal 0.4 percent during the same period to \$26.27 billion, resulting in a nine-month trade deficit of \$1.69 billion or much higher than the \$511 million trade gap in the same period last year.

Seasonally, the country's importation peaks during the third quarter as producers seek to take advantage of the robust consumer spending during the Christmas season.

ATR-Kim Eng Securities economist Luz Lorenzo noted that this year, however, this importation pattern was altered as a lot of local producers had front-loaded their foreign spending in the first quarter prior to the breakout of the war in Iraq.

"It was expected that imports for the following months would slow down, although by this time, it should have started to strengthen," Lorenzo said.

"I think that the manufacturers do not want to get stuck with a lot of inventories because domestic demand is still weak and given all the uncertainties—because when you import, you import for current consumption as well as for inventory," she said.

Imports from Japan accounted for 21.5 percent of the total bill in September from a year ago while purchases from the United States accounted for 19 percent.

Despite the sluggish imports in September, export earnings during the same month rebounded after a two-month slump, rising by 2.3 percent to \$3.26 billion from a year ago, on modest expansion of electronics shipment.

Doris C. Dumlaog

China's economy "should remain strong in 2004, with the economy growing at about an eight percent annual rate," the IMF said.

Deflationary pressures have been easing, the report said, with consumer prices up 0.7 percent in 2003 after declining by 0.8 percent in 2002. But unemployment continues to rise, it noted, with official unemployment in urban areas increasing to four percent in 2002, up 0.4 percentage points from 2001.

IMF directors reviewing the Chinese economic situation "noted that there is no clear evidence that the renminbi is substantially undervalued at this juncture," the report said.

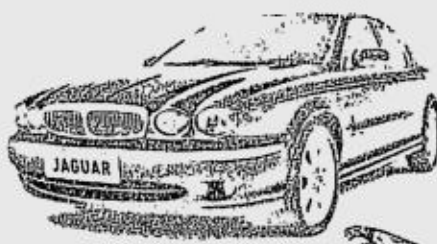
"Directors also felt that a currency revaluation would not by itself have a major impact on global current account imbalances—particularly given China's relatively small share in world trade."

AFP

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1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3680974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7221021

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2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

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1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

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2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

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2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

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BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS
(In compliance with RA 7041)

DISBURSING OFFICER I, SG-06, Item No. DO1-1-1998. Completion of two years studies in college (preferably in Accounting) with relevant training and experience and CS Subprofessional/ appropriate first level eligibility.

ACCOUNTING CLERK II, SG-06, Item No. AC2-1-1998. Completion of two years studies in college (preferably in Accounting) with relevant training and experience and CS Subprofessional/ appropriate first level eligibility.

MESSANGER, SG-3, Item No. M-1-1998. Elementary school graduate with relevant training and experience and knows how to drive a motorcycle/vehicle.

SENIOR HISTORY RESEARCHER, SG-18, Item No. SHHR-1 & 4-1998. Completion of academic requirements for a Master's degree in History/Art Studies/Museology, 2 years relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; CS Professional/ appropriate eligibility for 2nd level position.

MUSEUM TECHNICIAN II, SG-08, Item No. MUST2-4-1998. (For promotion) Completion of two years studies preferably in History/Museology, one year relevant experience, 4 hours of relevant training and CS Subprofessional/Museum Technician/appropriate eligibility for first level position.

SHRINE GUIDE, SG-6, Item Nos. SHRG-6 & 13-1998. Completion of two years studies in college (preferably with units in history/social sciences/ communication arts); CS Subprofessional/ appropriate first level eligibility.

SECURITY GUARD II, SG-5, Item No. SECG2-1-1998. (For promotion) Completion of secondary school course with relevant experience and training. Security Guard license (CSG MC 11, s. 1996, Cat II).

UTILITY WORKER I, SG-1, Item Nos. UTW1-20 & 21-1998. (For provincial assignment) Must be able to read and write.

HISTORY RESEARCHER II, SG-14, ITEM NO. HTRY2-17-1998. Bachelors degree in Architecture with one year relevant experience, four hours relevant training and Licensure for Architects.

DRAFTSMAN II, SG-08, Item No. DSM2-1-1998. Completion of two years studies in college preferably in Architecture or Civil Engineering with one year of relevant experience, four hours of relevant training and Career Service (Subprofessionally) Draftsman or Illustrator (MC 11, s. 96 - Cat. I) appropriate first level eligibility.

SACRED HEART of JESUS

This Sunday, November 23, on the Solemnity of Christ the King, all the Bishops of the Philippines and the priest of every parish will lead the Catholic faithful in a solemn Act of Consecration, consecrating all families and the entire nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

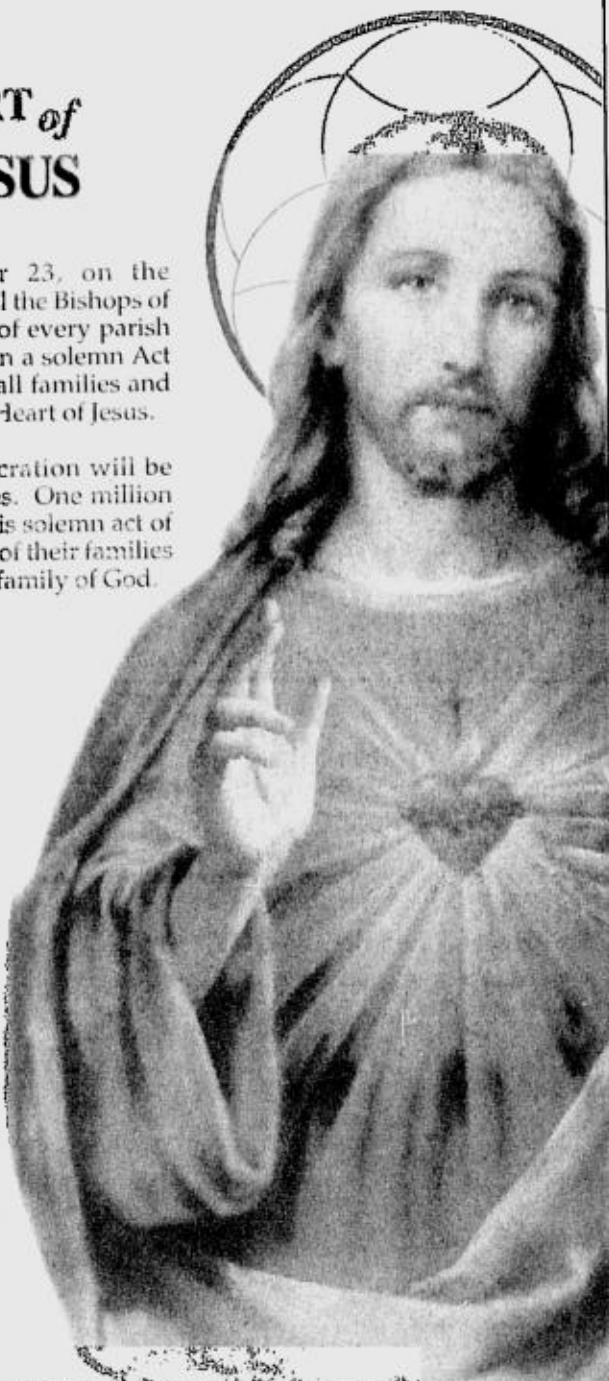
This solemn Act of Consecration will be specially dedicated for families. One million families are expected to join this solemn act of consecration for the protection of their families and of the Filipino people as a family of God.

NO MAS AMOR QUE EL TUYO (Traditional title, lyrics in Filipino)

Walang higit na pag-ibig,
O Mahal na Puso!
Ang bayang Pilipino
alay sa Puso Mo.

Sa templo, sa tahanan, sambit
namin and 'Yong Ngalan.
Maghahari Kang tunay,
sa Aparri hanggang Jolo.

Malaon na naming pangarap,
paghahari Mo sa Silangan.
Pananampalataya, nani'y
singningas ng araw,
'Sintatag ng kabundukan,
'sinlawak ng karagatan.
Kailanma'y di pabibihag, bayan
Mo sa kasalanan.
Tanghal sa tanang dako,
ang banal Mong sagisag.
Ang sumpa ng karimlan,
di magtatagumpay.



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 90, QUEZON CITY

IN THE MATTER OF:

PETITION FOR REHABILITATION
WITH PRAYER FOR SUSPENSION
OF ACTIONS AND PROCEEDINGS
AGAINST PETITIONER.

SPECIAL PROCEEDING NO. Q-03-071

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.,
Petitioner.

X-----X

STAY ORDER

Before this Court is a verified petition/application for rehabilitation filed by the above-named petitioner.

Briefly, the petitioner alleges that despite the fact that it has total assets of P16,940,306,229.61 as of October 31, 2003, it foresees an impossibility of meeting its debts as they respectively fall due. The petitioner contends that on the basis of projected market conditions for the next nine (9) years, 2003-2012, it has a good chance of being rehabilitated. The rehabilitation plan calls for the rescheduling and restructuring of Maynilad's suspended and current concession fees to MWSS with interest at 9% per annum and rescheduling and restructuring of a big part of its outstanding debts/liabilities, in the total sum of P17,592,043,124.08 as of October 31, 2003, among other things. Consequently, the petitioner prays for the issuance of a Stay Order pending proceedings before this Court.

A careful examination of the petition shows that the same conforms substantially with Section 2, Rule 4 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation (see also Supreme Court Resolution on banc in A.M. No. 00-8-10-SC). This Court therefore finds the petition to be sufficient in form and substance.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, this Court issues Stay Order, in accordance with Section 6, Rule 4 of the aforesaid Interim Rules, as follows:

- 1.) Appointing Mrs. Rosario S. Bernaldo, a certified public accountant, lawyer and management practitioner by profession with residence at 19865 Willow Street, Executive Heights Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila, as rehabilitation receiver who shall be considered as an officer of the court and who shall have the powers, duties and functions as provided in Section 14, Rule 4 of the aforesaid Interim Rules. The rehabilitation receiver must post a bond of P10,000,000.00 before entering upon her powers, duties and functions and must take an oath, as provided under Section 15, Rule 4 of the aforesaid Interim Rules. The petitioner is directed to serve immediately a copy of this Stay Order upon the rehabilitation receiver, Mrs. Rosario S. Bernaldo who shall manifest her acceptance or non-acceptance of her appointment not later than five (5) days from her receipt hereof;
- 2.) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by court action or otherwise, against the petitioner, its guarantors and service not solidarily liable with the petitioner;
- 3.) Prohibiting the petitioner from selling, encumbering, transferring, or disposing in any manner any of its properties except in the ordinary course of business;
- 4.) Prohibiting the petitioner from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as at the date of the filing of the petition;
- 5.) Prohibiting the suppliers of the petitioner from withholding supply of goods and services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the petitioner makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this Stay Order;
- 6.) Directing the petitioner to pay in full all administrative expenses incurred after issuance of this Stay Order.

The initial hearing on the petition is set on January 7, 2004 (Wednesday) at 9:00 A.M. at the session room of Branch 90 of this Court located at the Ground Floor of the Hall of Justice Building, Quezon City Hall complex, Quezon City. All creditors and all interested parties including the Securities and Exchange Commission are directed to file with this Court and serve upon the petitioner a verified comment on or opposition to the petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing as set forth above, and they are put on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings before this Court. All creditors and all interested parties are further directed to secure from this Court copies of the petition and its annexes within such time as to enable them to file their verified comment on or opposition to the petition and to prepare them for the initial hearing of the petition, and to attain this purpose, the petitioner is ordered to file with this Court initially twenty (20) additional copies of the petition and its annexes within ten (10) days from receipt hereof.

The petitioner is furthermore directed by this Court to have a copy of this Order published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Star, and one other newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines with widespread circulation in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao if it is a newspaper chosen by raffie other than the herein-named newspapers, considering the billions of pesos involved in this case and the probable presence of creditors and interested parties all over the country, once a week for two consecutive weeks, with the last publication effected at least, three (3) weeks prior to the date of initial hearing as set forth above, at the expense of the petitioner.

The Branch Clerk of Court, Atty. Armand H. Mejia is ordered to see to it that Mr. Noel B. Mandap, the Process Server, shall serve immediately copies of this Order upon: 1) Mr. Rafael M. Alunan III (the president and duly authorized representative of the petitioner) c/o Maynilad Water Services, Inc., MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City; 2) Atty. Joshua Gilbert F. Paraiso (the counsel of petitioner), 12th Floor, East Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City; 3) Atty. Rosario S. Bernaldo (the rehabilitation receiver), 19865 Willow Street, Executive Heights Subdivision, Parañaque, Metro Manila; 4) the Administrator, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), MWSS Compound, Katipunan, Balara, Quezon City; 5) the Honorable Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission, EDSA (Epifanio De Los Santos Avenue), Mandaluyong City.

SO ORDERED.
Quezon City, November 17, 2003.

(Sgd.) REYNALDO B. DAWAY
Presiding Judge

(PDI-Nov. 20 & 27, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
TOLL REGULATORY BOARD
2/F Integrated Bar of the Phils. Bldg.
Doña Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. Nos. 6315901; 6315025; 6314749; 6314673
Fax No. 6316034

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) invites all interested parties to obtain a copy of the Minimum Design and Performance Standards and Specifications for Static Medium and Variable Message Signs (containing advertisements) from 24 to 27 November 2003. Comments, recommendations and suggestions based on appropriate documentary evidence shall be submitted by 05 December 2003. Discussions on submissions will be held on 09 December 2003 starting 1:30 p.m. at the TRB Offices, 2nd Floor IBP Building, Doña Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

The said minimum design and performance standards and specifications shall become effective seven (7) days from signature of the TRB Board.

(Sgd.) RAMON V. DUMAUAL, MNSA
PBAC Chairman

(PDI - Nov. 20, 2003)

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19 November 2003

POSTPONEMENT OF BIDDING

The **TRUSTEE COMMITTEE** for the Welfareville Property through the Welfareville Development project Bids and Awards Committee (WDP-BAC) is announcing for the postponement of the bidding for the sale of a portion of the Welfareville Property located in Mandaluyong City known as **Parcel Two-West Side** with an approximate area of 288,770 square meters.

(Sgd.) **MYLENE G. ALBANO**
Assistant Secretary, DENR
Chairperson, WDP-BAC

(PDI - Nov. 20, 2003)

Kasalan sa San Pablo (Laguna)



Creation of Jenny Bernardo Belen
PHOTO BY SAN PABLO GALLERIA

San Pablo City Government's One Stop Shop played host to the 8th leg of the road show. Held last November 15-16, the event was formally opened by Honorable City Mayor Florante Boy Aquino and First Lady Leila Aquino, together with notable fashion designer Renee Salud and ABS-CBN reporter Sol Aragones.

Organized by SPCHS-MPC, headed by Mrs. Loida Dantic, and known event organizer Mr. Egay Victorio, the City Government's One Stop Processing Center became a one stop shop of wedding-related needs during the 2-day event. The event was highlighted with a bridal fashion show on the 2nd night by the City's leading designers.



Creation of Alex Alcos
PHOTO BY SAN PABLO GALLERIA



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IN THE MATTER OF THE HIGH COURT
BETWEEN:

2003 No. 1067 4P

CBM ENGINEERING SERVICES LIMITED
And
SIMON MARKS
Plaintiff
Defendant

TAKE NOTICE that Application will be made on behalf of the Plaintiff in the High Court, Four Courts, Dublin 7, Ireland on the 1st day of December, 2003 for:-

1. An Order restraining the Defendant, (formerly of 29 Castle Avenue Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland) his sons and agents or any other person acting on behalf of the Defendant from dissipating the assets of the Defendant within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court beneath the sum of €43,106.58;
2. All such ancillary Orders as appears to the Court to be just and convenient to include an Order directing the disclosure of the assets of the Defendant within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court;
3. An Order directing the Defendant to pay to the Plaintiff the sum of €43,106.48;
4. Damages for detinue and/or conversion;
5. Such further and other relief as to this Honourable Court doth seem fit and meet;
6. The costs of and ancillary to these proceedings.

AND an interim Order having been granted by Mr. Justice Herbert on the 22nd September 2003 and an Order for service of these proceedings by way of advertisement in a newspaper circulating in the Philippines was Order by Ms. Justice Carroll on 2nd November, 2003.

Dated this day of 2003

TO: The Registrar
Central Office,
Four Courts
Dublin 7
IRELAND

SIGNED GROARKE & PARTNERS
24-26 Upper Ormond Quay,
Dublin
IRELAND

AND to the Defendant,
Simon Marks
(PDI-Nov. 20, 2003)

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but once.**



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ATTY. FLORENCIO TIONGSON SANTOS

Co-FOUNDER & PARTNER
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September 13, 1923 - November 17, 2003

Peacefully joined his Creator at the age of 80.

He is survived by his loving wife **Natividad Navarro**;
 children **Florencio Jr. & Maria, Cesar & Baby,**
Ramon & Vera Morales, Drs. Glenn & Ellen Abundo;
 grandchildren **Jenny & Robbie, Michael & Maan,**
Vincent, Ryan, Ralph, Monica & Michelle,
Nicole, Bela and Ana.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the King Parish Church,
 Chapel C, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.
 Interment will be on Saturday, November 22, 2003
 at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina
 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

The family request the pious readers to pray
 for eternal repose of his soul.

FRANCISCO
"DINDO" B. VENTIGAN

of Umingan, Pangasinan & Quezon City

*Peacefully joined our Lord on
 November 17, 2003 at the age of 37.*

His loving mama **Aurora Belisario** and late papa **Ben Ventigan** (†); loving sister **Venice V. Teodoro**; niece and nephew **Karla and Cholo**; together with **Auntie Sally and Uncle Stack Belisario**, cousins, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mortuary of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Mother Ignacia, Q.C.

Interment will be on Saturday,
 November 22, 2003 after the
 8:00 A.M. Mass.

NORMA DIMANLIG DE GUZMAN

*Now peacefully united with our Almighty
 on 18th of November 2003 at the age of 68.*

She is survived by her loving husband **Epifanio S. De Guzman** & son **Norman, Marjorie**; her daughter-in-law & grandson **John Maynard**; sister **Eva** & brother **German**. They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Capilla Aurora A, Arlington East The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Avenue, Pasig City.

Cremation will be held at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina on November 22, 2003 at 1:00 p.m.

**"Whoever finds his life will lose it,
 and whoever loses his life for
 My sake will find it."** Matthew 10:39

*"We walk by faith not by sight... confident and well-pleased
 to leave the body and to go home to the Lord."
 2 Corinthians 5:7-8*

Our Beloved
MANUEL T. SANTOS

of San Luis, Pampanga
 and San Francisco, California
 Knights of Columbus, Corpus Christi Church,
 San Francisco, California

*peacefully joined his Creator
 on November 17, 2003 at the age of 88.*

He is survived by his loving daughter **Gerardina**; son-in-law **Virgilio (Talao)**; daughter-in-law **Marina**; grandchildren **Boy & Zeny, Mitos & Arnel, Bong & Lyn, Alexis & Pamela, Lorenzo & Rowena, Jon-Jon & Valerie** and **Maria & Ed**; great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces and long-time friends.

His remains lie in state at the family residence
 in Sto. Tomas, San Luis, Pampanga.

Interment will be on Saturday, 22 November 2003 at the
 Sta. Lucia Memorial Park, San Luis, Pampanga after the
 11:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Aloysius Gonzaga Church.

Manuel will also be remembered in the following churches:

St. Brendan, S.F., CA
 St. Augustine, South S.F., CA
 Passionist Community, Daly City, CA
 Sta. Monica Church, Albuquerque, Bohol
 Immaculate Heart Seminary, Tagbilaran City, Bohol

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

MARCIANO A.
DEL ROSARIO, JR.

Of Malabon and Pulilan, Bulacan

*Who died on November 17, 2003
 at the age of 66.*

He is survived by his loving wife **LOURDES JOTA**;
 children **CHITO & NORA, CHONA, CLAIRE, CHI-CHI** and **CHATO**; grandchildren **LEILA, CAMILLE & CLARISSE, LOUDETTE, MAE & FAITH**; brother and sisters **LILING & TONY, NENE & PRUDING, MILA & AUGUSTO, LULU & ENARD, JOSIE, FELIA, ROBERTO & OBET, MEDY, PATTY** and **CORA**.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will take place on November 23, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

We remember and pray for the eternal rest of the soul of our dear
ILUMINADA "LUMING" S. BERNARDO

On her 4th Death Anniversary
 on November 21, 2003

Masses for the repose of her soul will be offered
 in the following churches at 6:00 a.m.

Sta. Clara, Quezon City
 Lourdes Church, Quezon City
 San Jose de Trozo, Manila
 Pink Sisters Convent (New Manila), Quezon City
 Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City
 Mt. Carmel Church, Quezon City
 at 10:00 a.m.
 St. Anne (Hagonoy)

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**"I am
 the
 way,
 the
 truth
 and
 the
 life.
 No
 one
 comes
 to
 the
 Father
 except
 through
 Me."**

John 14:6

*Autumn comes. It always does.
Goodbye comes. It always does ...
And so I begin my fallow vigil,
Remembering the truth of the ages;
Unless the wheat seed dies
It cannot sing a new birth.
Unless summer gives in to autumn
Springtime will never embrace me.*

(Author unknown)

The family of the late
TAN CHUA KING HA
*thanks you, our friends,
for your generous gestures of
kindness
and care in our time of
sorrow.*

Her bereaved and devoted children and spouses,
Lucio and Carmen
Sencio and Lay Ming
Mariano and Aleta
Harry and Cindy
Frank and Winnie
Shirley and Domingo
Sally and Chi Ming



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Invitation for Bids (IFB)

November 20, 2003

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.

2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following projects and its location to wit:

PACKAGE NO.	PROJECT LOCATION	SCHOOL	TYPE OF WORK	PCAB Category	Date of Opening of Bids
ZDS-NCB-04-2 024B	DMATILING-B Dimatiling, Zambo. del Sur	Refer to Bidding Documents for Details	R/R-12 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-05-2 027B	DINAS-B Dinas, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	NC-2 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-14-2 029B	LAKEWOOD-B Lakewood, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-12 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 2:00 PM
ZDS-NCB-15-2 030A	LAPUYAN-A Lapuyan, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	NC-2 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 2:00 PM
ZDS-NCB-15-3 031B	LAPUYAN-B Lapuyan, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-11 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 23, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-19-3 033B	MARGOSATUBIG-A Margosatubig, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-10 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 23, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-29-2 035B	TIGBAO-B Tigbao, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-12 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 23, 2003 2:00 PM
ZDS-NCB-32-2 036B	V. SAGUN-B V. Sagun, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-9 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 18, 2003 2:00 PM

Notes: NC-new construction; R/R-Repair/Rehabilitation; CL-Classrooms

3. Bidding documents may be purchased at DepEd Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur with office address at J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City for a nonrefundable fee of P2,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Committee, Department of Education - Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur, J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City on or before above stated time and dates, at which they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

5. For clarification, a Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted on December 9, 2003 at 2:00 P.M. at the office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Division of Zamboanga del Sur, J. Alano St., Pagadian City.

(Sgd.) DR. BRICCO S. MALINIT
Chairperson

Division Bids and Awards Committee - District 2

(PDI-Nov. 20, 2003)



Department of Education
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT
DIVISION PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT
DIVISION OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
J. Alano St., Pagadian City
(062) 2144-388



Invitation for Bids (IFB)

November 20, 2003

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.

2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following projects and its location to wit:

PACKAGE NO.	PROJECT LOCATION	SCHOOL	TYPE OF WORK	PCAB Category	Date of Opening of Bids
ZDS-NCB-10-2 015B	JOSEFINA-B Josefina, Zambo. del Sur	Refer to Bidding Documents for Details	R/R-10 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-17-2 020	MAHAYAG/MOLAVE Mahayag/Molave, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	NC-2 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 10:00 AM
ZDS-NCB-21-2 021	MOLAVE WEST Molave, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-9 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 2:00 PM
ZDS-NCB-28-3 022A	TAMBULIG-A Tambulig, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-10 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 2:00 PM
ZDS-NCB-28-4 023B	TAMBULIG-B Tambulig, Zambo. del Sur	-do-	R/R-9 CL	Small "B"-ARC	Dec. 22, 2003 2:00 PM

Notes: NC-new construction; R/R-Repair/Rehabilitation; CL-Classrooms

3. Bidding documents may be purchased at DepEd Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur with office address at J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City for a nonrefundable fee of P2,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Committee, Department of Education - Division Office of Zamboanga del Sur, J.S. Alano St., Pagadian City on or before above stated time and dates, at which they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

5. For clarification, a Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted on December 9, 2003 at 2:00 P.M. at the office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Division of Zamboanga del Sur, J. Alano St., Pagadian City.

(Sgd.) VISMINDA G. SERRATO
Chairperson

Division Bids and Awards Committee - District 1

(PDI-Nov. 20, 2003)



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of Fifty-Two (52) Units Gas Analyzers for the purpose of implementing the provisions of the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999 and its IRR, specifically in the enforcement of the Anti-Smoke Belching Campaign.

The approved budget for the contract to be bid is Fifteen Million Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (P15,600,000.00) from the Metro Manila Air Quality Improvement Sector Development Program (MMAQISDP) loan of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) now invites sealed quotations from eligible suppliers who are member countries of ADB for the supply of the above item for the purpose of the Project.

Eligibility forms and other documents are available for issuance until the deadline on 21 November 2003, 3:00 P.M. at the DOTC BAC for the Implementation of the CAA Rules and Regulations Office, 16th Floor, The Columbia Tower, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila. Last day of submission of duly accomplished Eligibility Statements shall be received not later than 11 December 2003, 10:00 A.M. Opening of Eligibility documents will follow at 2:00 P.M. at the BAC Office.

Eligible parties shall be issued a complete set of proposal documents starting on 22 December 2003 to 25 January 2004 upon submission of a Letter of Intent to the above Office and payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) in cash or manager's check payable to DOTC.

Sealed bids shall be received at the BAC Office not later than 20 February 2004, 3:00 P.M. at the same address. Opening of bid proposals shall be held immediately thereafter at the same office.

The DOTC-BAC for the Implementation of the CAA Rules and Regulations reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality in the bids received, and accept such offer that may be considered most advantageous to the Government.

The bidder shall bear all costs in the preparation of their bids and the government shall in no case be responsible or liable for their costs regardless of the outcome of the bidding process.

(Sgd.) ARTURO T. VALDEZ
Undersecretary for Transportation
Chairman, BAC

(PDI-Nov. 20 & 21, 2003)

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Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on November 27, 2003, 2:00 p.m., Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
MANILA			
CWB-7	No. 19, Road 7, Pag-asa, Quezon City	240 m ² residential/commercial lot covered by TCT No. 209559 w/ 3-storey residential/factory/office bldg.	P 6,281,600.00
BATAAN			
AMD-MC-87	Sta. Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis, Camaya, Mariveles:	Residential lots with bldg. & imprvts.:	
AMD-MC-88	Lot - 27 Blk - 20	50 m ² TCT No. T-229480	P 190,000.00
AMD-MC-89	12 9	50 m ² TCT No. T-229472	P 190,000.00
AMD-MC-90	14 20	50 m ² TCT No. T-229492	P 186,200.00
	8 8	50 m ² TCT No. T-229471	P 179,200.00
BICOL			
BIC-DCA001	San Pedro, Sta. Elena, Camarines Norte	50,000 m ² agro-residential lot (TCT No. T-46018)	P 1,531,300.00
BULACAN			
AMD-PY-91	Cagayan Valley Road, Bgy. Tambubong, San Rafael	6 contiguous industrial lots (TCT Nos. T-167376 to T-167381), total area of 45,997 m ² w/ bldgs. & imprvts. and machinery & equipment	P 75,560,000.00
CAVITE			
DIG-LS-02	Bo. Mambog, Bacoor	2 adjoining residential lots (TCT Nos. T-935854 & T-935855) total area of 120 m ² w/ bldg. & imprvts.	P 602,600.00
AMD-PY-92	Along Provincial Road, Bo. Sinaliw Malaki, Alfonso	788 m ² residential lot (TCT No. T-369067) w/ bldg. & imprvts.	P 329,200.00
DAVAO			
	Kristina Homes Subd., Lizada, Toril, Davao City	Residential lots with bldg. & imprvts.:	
AMD-PY-93	Lot - 22 Block - 5	116 m ² TCT No. T-347751	P 177,700.00
AMD-PY-94	23 1	110 m ² TCT No. T-347755	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-95	18 5	110 m ² TCT No. T-347754	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-96	37 3	110 m ² TCT No. T-347753	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-97	35 3	110 m ² TCT No. T-347752	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-98	4 5	110 m ² TCT No. T-347750	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-99	15 5	110 m ² TCT No. T-347749	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-100	34 3	110 m ² TCT No. T-347748	P 173,200.00
LAGUNA			
DIG-LS-03	Bo. San Antonio, San Pedro, Laguna	2 adjoining residential lots (TCT Nos. T-468390 & T-468391), total area of 324 m ²	P 939,600.00
CHATELLE (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AMD-ML-101	La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak, Quezon City	1-unit Road Grader, HUBER WARCO approx. 2.5 m. blade length	P 85,500.00
CWB-7a to -7f	No. 19, Road 7, Pag-asa, Quezon City	6-units various machinery and equipment (pneumatic high speed overarm router, RU LONG / radial arm saw, MAGGI/ air compressor Ingersoll Rand / hand jointer planer, HWA SHIN / pneumatic nailer & stapler	P 103,800.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

- To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
- To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
- To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:

892-1566 / 893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2218/2252 for Code starting with AMD;

892-3836 or 818-9511 loc. 2227 or 1424 for BIC;

926-1686 or 818-9511 loc. 1411 for CWB; and

(082) 553-2933 / 553-3689 or 818-9511 loc. 1469 for DIG.

(PDI - November 19 & 20, 2003)

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

WE ARE HIRING

Our travel agency is in immediate need of the following personnel:

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- Must be responsible and hardworking

2. SALES EXECUTIVE

- With pleasing personality/Can communicate well
- Trustworthy / Must be responsible and hardworking

Interested applicants may submit their resumé with picture to Thesa at Rm. 610 Royal Plaza Twin Tower No. 648 Remedios St. Malate Manila Tel: 30-20717



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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIVELIHOOD CORPORATION

7/F One Corporate Plaza Cond., 845 A. Arnaiz Ave. Legaspi Vill., Brgy. San Lorenzo, Makati City Tel. No. 817-0771

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Livelihood Corporation (LIVECOR), a government-owned and controlled corporation attached to the Department of Agriculture, hereby invites prospective bidders of Security Services to apply for eligibility and to bid for LIVECOR's security services requirements for CY 2004 to be deployed at the following stations with approved budget as follows:

Units/Projects	No. of Staffers	Budget
Central Office - Makati City	2	P 486,000.00
MetroMan Complex - Mandaluyong City	10	1,406,000.00
Midman Complex - Quezon City	3	496,000.00
Angeles Livelihood Complex - Angeles City	18	2,091,000.00
Maharlika Livelihood Complex (1) - Baguio City	22	2,132,000.00
Maharlika Livelihood Complex (2) - Baguio City	3	249,000.00
TOTAL	58	P 6,852,000.00

Bidding documents can be obtained anytime during office hours at LIVECOR Central Office, 7/F One Corporate Plaza, 845 Arnaiz Avenue, Legaspi Village, Makati City after paying to the Cashier a non-refundable amount of P200.00 only. Prospective bidders are invited to attend a Pre-bidding Conference to be held on November 27, 2003, 2:00 P.M. at the above-given address. Submission and opening of bid proposals and eligibility requirements will be on December 11, 2003, 2:00 P.M. at the same address. The required eligibility documents are as follows:

- Letter of Intent
- Certificate under oath that the company represented is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation.
- SEC or Bureau of Domestic Trade Registration Papers;
- 2003 Business Permit and License
- 2002 Income Tax Returns "Received" by the BIR or Authorized Banks
- 2002 Audited Financial Statements
- SSS Certificate of Registration
- SSS Certificate of Premium Remittances for the first and second quarter of 2003
- List of existing and on-going contracts indicating the name, nature, date, amount, complete business address, telephone numbers and contact persons.
- Certificate under oath that all documents submitted are true and faithful reproduction of the original and all the information indicated therein are true and correct
- Authority to Represent Issued by the Corporate Secretary or Board Resolution whichever is available.
- Certificate of Bank Deposit of not less than 10% of the Approved Budgeted Cost of the contract intended to bid.
- Computation of Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) which is subject for validation by the Bids and Awards Committee.

The Livelihood Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defects therein and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Government. For more details, please contact Della Areña or Eduardo P. Sajonia at Tel. Nos. 817-0439 and 817-0771.

For the Bids and Awards Committee:

(Sgd.) LYNDON PAUL R. DAZ
Chairman

(PDI - November 20, 2003)



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Third Elementary Education Project
Bids and Awards Committee
Division of Mountain Province

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

IFB No.-002-SBP-2003

November 20, 2003

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for the civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC Loans (Nov. 1987)

2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders classified by IAC & PCAB for general building for the proposed bid packages

Package No.	License	Repair of One (1) Unit Two (2) Classrooms School Building @ Layug-Oglong ES/ Repair of one (1) Unit Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Puyao-all are located in the Municipality of Natonin, Mountain Province
MTP-05-04-0050	Small B	
Package No.	License	Repair of One (1) Unit Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Butac ES/ Repair of Two (2) Units Five Classrooms School Building @ Apapawan ES all are located in the Municipality of Natonin, Mountain Province.
MTP-05-05-0054	Small B	
Package No.	License	Repair of One (1) Unit Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Natonin CS/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Maducayan ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Two (2) Classrooms School Building @ Salok ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit One (1) Classroom School Building @ Banawat ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Tonglayan ES all are located in the Municipality of Natonin, Mountain Province
MTP-05-06-0055	License at least Medium A	
Package No.	License	Repair of Two (2) Units Six (6) Classrooms School Building @ Besao CS/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Gueyad ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Catangan ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Two (2) Classrooms School Building @ Pangwao ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Tambosan ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Dandenac ES all are located in the Municipality of Besao, Mountain Province
MTP-03-08-0056	License at least Medium A	
Package No.	License	New Construction of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms Two Storey TEEP School Building @ Bontoc CS/ Repair of Two (2) Units Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Dalcian ES all are located in the Municipality of Bontoc, Mountain Province.
MTP-04-09-0057	License at least Medium A	
Package No.	License	Repair of Two (2) Units Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Maligcong ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Mantit ES all are located in the Municipality of Bontoc, Mountain Province.
MTP-04-10-0058	Small B	
Package No.	License	New Construction of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms Two Storey TEEP School Building @ Paracelis CS/ Repair of Two (2) Units Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Makilo ES all are located in the Municipality of Paracelis, Mountain Province.
MTP-05-06-0059	License at least Medium A	
Package No.	License	New Construction of One (1) Unit Two (2) Classrooms One Storey TEEP School Building @ Paracelis CS/ Repair of Two (2) Units Four (4) Classrooms School Building @ Paracelis CS/ Repair of One (1) Unit One (1) Classroom School Building @ Maraling PS all are located in the Municipality of Paracelis, Mountain Province.
MTO-06-07-0060	Small B	
Package No.	License	Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Palitad ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit One (1) Classroom School Building @ kalao PS/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Butigue ES all are located in the Municipality of Paracelis, Mountain Province.
MTP-05-08-0061	Small B	
Package No.	License	Construction of One (1) Unit One (1) Classroom School Building @ Anabel ES/ Repair of Two (2) Units Six (6) Classrooms School Building @ Betagan ES all are located in the Municipality of Sadanga, Mountain Province.
MTP-08-04-0062	Small B	
Package No.	License	New Construction of One (1) Unit One (1) Classroom One Storey TEEP School Building @ Bekigan ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Two (2) Classrooms School Building @ Sacasacan ES all are located in the Municipality of Barlig, Mountain Province.
MTP-08-05-0063	Small B	
Package No.	License	Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Lias ES/ Repair of One (1) Unit Three (3) Classrooms School Building @ Ogo-op PS all are located in the Municipality of Barlig, Mountain Province.
MTP-01-05-0064	Small B	

3. Bidding documents may be purchased at TEEP DPISU Office, DepEd, Division of Mountain Province with address at Bontoc, Mountain Province for a nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) only for each package. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Committee, TEEP DPISU OFFICE, DepEd, Division of Mountain Province, Bontoc, Mountain Province on or before 10:00 AM December 17, 2003 at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(Sgd.) ERLINDA P. SAN JOSE

Chairperson
Division Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Nov. 20, 2003)

SEND YOUR RESUMÉS
INSTANTLY





NOW SHOWING

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1 MR. SUAVE	1 MR. SUAVE	1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 SEX SCANDAL	2 THE RUNDOWN	2 MASTER & COMMANDER
3 LIBERATED	3 MASTER & COMMANDER	3 MASTER & COMMANDER
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE	4 LIBERATED	4 SCARY MOVIE 3
5 WRONG TURN	5 SCARY MOVIE 3	5 WRONG TURN
6 SCARY MOVIE 3	6 THE WISHER	6 THE RUNDOWN
7 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	7 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	7 SEX SCANDAL
8 MASTER & COMMANDER	8 SEX SCANDAL	8 MY FIRST ROMANCE
	9 WRONG TURN	9 MR. SUAVE
	10 MY FIRST ROMANCE	10 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
		11 THE WISHER
		12 LIBERATED
SM CITY CEBU 213394	SM SOUTHMALL 604500	SM CINEMA TUTUBAN 251432
1 MASTER & COMMANDER	1 THE WISHER	1 MASTER & COMMANDER
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	2 WRONG TURN	2 SEX SCANDAL
3 FREAKY FRIDAY	3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	3 MR. SUAVE
4 HOUSE OF 1000 CORPSES	4 SCARY MOVIE 3	4 SCARY MOVIE 3
5 LIBERATED	5 MASTER & COMMANDER	
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE	6 LIBERATED	
7 MR. SUAVE	7 MR. SUAVE	
8 MASTER & COMMANDER	8 MASTER & COMMANDER	
	9 MY FIRST ROMANCE	
	10 SEX SCANDAL	
SM CITY BACOR	SM CITY FAIRVIEW	SM CITY ILOILO
1 MY FIRST ROMANCE	1 THE WISHER	1 THE SUSPECT
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	2 WRONG TURN	2 RESERVED
3 MASTER & COMMANDER	3 MASTER & COMMANDER	3 MR. SUAVE
4 MR. SUAVE	4 MASTER & COMMANDER	4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 SCARY MOVIE 3	5 MY FIRST ROMANCE	5 FREAKY FRIDAY
6 RESERVED	6 SEX SCANDAL	6 MASTER & COMMANDER
7 WRONG TURN	7 THE WISHER	7 RESERVED
8 SEX SCANDAL	8 WRONG TURN	8 AMERICAN PSYCHO 2
SM CITY PAMPANGA	SM CITY MANILA	SM CITY ILOILO
1 MR. SUAVE	1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 MASTER & COMMANDER	2 MASTER & COMMANDER	2 MASTER & COMMANDER
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	3 SCARY MOVIE 3	3 SCARY MOVIE 3
4 MAPUPULANG LABI	4 SCARY MOVIE 3	4 SCARY MOVIE 3
5 BELPHEGOR	5 WRONG TURN	5 WRONG TURN
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE	6 MASTER & COMMANDER	6 MASTER & COMMANDER
	7 SEX SCANDAL	7 SEX SCANDAL
	8 THE PHONE	8 THE PHONE
	9 MR. SUAVE	9 MR. SUAVE
	10 THE WISHER	10 THE WISHER
	11 MY FIRST ROMANCE	11 MY FIRST ROMANCE
	12 LIBERATED	12 LIBERATED
SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT	SM CITY DAVAO	SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 SCARY MOVIE 3	1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	1 UNDERWORLD
2 MR. SUAVE	2 FREDDY VS. JASON	2 MR. SUAVE
3 MASTER & COMMANDER	3 MR. SUAVE	3 MR. SUAVE
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	4 HOUSE OF 1000 CORPSES	4 UPTOWN GIRLS
	5 IDENTITY	4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
	6 MASTER & COMMANDER	
SM BICUTAN	SM CITY LUCENA	SM CITY BAGUIO
1 MASTER & COMMANDER	1 UNDERWORLD	
2 MR. SUAVE	2 IDENTITY	
3 SCARY MOVIE 3	3 THE RUNDOWN	
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	4 MR. SUAVE	
SM CITY MARILAO		
OPENS Nov. 28		OPENS Nov. 21

THE PODIUM CINEMA

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SCARY MOVIE 3
11:30 FS/11:55 MF/1:45/3:35/5:25/7:15/9:05/10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:30 END

MASTER & COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD
11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

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4 WRONG TURN
12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55

2 SCARY MOVIE 3
10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40
5 MR. SUAVE
10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50

3 MASTER AND COMMANDER
10:15, 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00
6 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
10:50, 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50

7 DARK BLUE
12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55
9 HEAD OF STATE
11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30

8 SEX SCANDAL
11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00
10 THE RUNDOWN
12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

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2 MASTER AND COMMANDER - 10:55, 1:45, 4:35, 7:25, 10:00
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 MASTER AND COMMANDER - 10:15, 1:05, 3:55, 6:45, 9:30
5 MR. SUAVE - 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
6 WRONG TURN - 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:30, 10:30
7 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS - 11:10, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30

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2 MASTER AND COMMANDER
3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 SCARY MOVIE 3
5 SEX SCANDAL
6 WRONG TURN
7 MASTER AND COMMANDER
8 DARK BLUE

Novaliches 935-3229 / 31

1 MASTER AND COMMANDER
2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 WRONG TURN
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
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MR. SUAVE3 MR. SUAVE
BELPHEGOR4 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
MASTER AND COMMANDER5 SCARY MOVIE 3
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS6 WRONG TURN

Bacolod 0341441-0456/59 Iloilo 0331336-8070 to 78

MASTER AND COMMANDER1 MASTER AND COMMANDER
MR. SUAVE2 SUCKERS
UNDERWORLD3 THE SUSPECT
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS4 MR. SUAVE
FREAKY FRIDAY5 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
THE PHONE6 AMERICAN PSYCHO 2

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MATRIX REVOLUTIONS1 MASTER AND COMMANDER
THE SPY2 THE PHONE
BELPHEGOR3 BELPHEGOR
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MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	DARK BLUE R18 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 1:40, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20
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Development Bank of the Philippines

MOToring

Does RP's *real* competitive edge lie in its auto parts industry?



By Charles E. Buban

(First of two parts)

THE LOCAL automotive industry believes that having more Philippine-made parts installed in millions of vehicles sold around the world is a worthy long-term goal for the government to embark on.

For the last decade motor vehicle parts makers have continuously increased their export performance reaching \$1.17 billion (about P65 billion) last year and is expected to reach \$1.5 billion (P83.1 billion) by 2005.

Their parts and components are currently being exported to 134 countries and territories around the world.

"Automotive parts and components can have bigger economic impact to this country, considering its higher domestic content, technological transfer, job cre-

ation and positive role in the development of the auto industry," said Feliciano Torres, president of the Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines.

The MVPMAP is composed of 101 automotive parts and components manufacturing companies, 70 percent of whom considered as small and medium enterprises.

Provide similar support

Early this month, Malacañang signed Executive Order 224 granting export incentives to assemblers engaged in the export of completely built-up (CBU) vehicles.

This is in line with the government's thrust to make the country an auto export hub in the Southeast Asian region.

"If we will be provided with a similar incentive grant (tariff preference through the application of export credit), then our sector can complement whatever economic benefit these CBU exporters can give this country in the fu-

ture and much more," explained Torres.

Torres revealed that the automotive industry is gearing for the expansion of the logistics support capabilities that the increased volume of Philippine-manufactured vehicle parts exports is expected to demand by 2005.

Incentive for assemblers

Under the government's export incentive program, Philippine auto assemblers engaged in CBU exports can avail of tax perks starting next year until 2008.

Exports incentives will come in the form of subsidy amounting to \$400 per CBU, with a minimum volume of 10,000 units.

As of now, only Ford Motor Group Philippines can benefit from this export incentive package as it is the country's only sole exporter of CBU vehicles to its neighboring Association of Southeast Asian Nation (Asean) countries.

Other automakers like Honda Cars Philippines announced its plan to export CBUs by 2007 while Mitsubishi Motors Philippines plans to ship out its Adventures by 2005.

Exports to Thailand, Indonesia

Within the framework of the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta), Ford Philippines currently exports the Ford Lynx and Mazda Protégé sedans and the Ford Escape and Mazda Tribute SUVs to Thailand and Indonesia.

Ford Philippines' P4-billion, 30,000-sq.-m facility has current production of about 15,000 units, which still fall short of its optimum capacity at 40,000 units a year.

To date, this Ford Philippines program has exported 12,000 units, a figure that is expected to reach 17,000 units by year-end.

Only few will benefit

But not everybody believes the auto export perks program will benefit all assemblers in the country.

Last month, an official of the Japanese embassy in Manila said the country still has a long way to go before it can be a major CBU exporter and expressed doubt that the program will entice more

manufacturers to export CBUs in the future.

The same Japanese official believes tax incentives should have been directed to focus on the auto parts makers that make up a bigger segment of the Philippine industry, adding that auto parts makers have been exporting for several years and have the competitive edge.

"Giving us added incentives can help boost the auto parts industry as we still lack basic requirements such as moldings which this country still imports from other countries," suggested Rafael Villareal, MVPMAP executive director.

Said Villareal: "Without export incentives, it would be difficult to attract additional investments which could particularly address the prohibitive costs of importation of the necessary raw materials, completely knocked downs and other components, availing port and warehousing facilities and transport services, labor, the additional processing equipment, packaging and packing for export and back again through the same process for eventual transshipment."

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AN ATTACKER aims at the side window which is protected by multilayered ballistic glass with polycarbonate inner layer.

Text by Tessa R. Salazar

(Last of two parts)
TECHNICIANS said the highest level of protection—at 4.5 (highest level it offers) for M16 rifle assault—could only be done on the likes of the Nissan Patrol V6, the new Toyota Land Cruiser UCL 100 series, and the Lexus LX 470 (an SUV). The technical group said the best vehicle it had done so far was the Lexus LX 470. The Exo is developing additional vehicles this year.

One member of the group said the Lexus owner was so confident he ran it at 100 kph, made a "panic stop" and swore he didn't feel the added 1,000 kg.

The Nissan Patrol V6 and the Land Cruiser were powerful enough not to require upgrading on their original equipment.

"Normally, the brake pads needed for armoring are the rally types. For the same clamping force, more pressure is applied. Armoring a vehicle would be equivalent to running a normal vehicle at a high speed and then making a sudden panic stop," said Arvin Villanueva, Exo Armoring Inc.'s managing director.

Various brands, makes

Exo has armored various brands and makes: Ford Expedition, Lincoln Town Car, Mercedes Benz, Nissan Cefiro, Toyota Camry, Nissan Pathfinder, Toyota Forerunner, Chrysler Jeep Cherokee, Dodge Durango and Toyota Prado.

Villanueva said the Suburban 1500 (5.4L), however, could only be armored for handguns. The Suburban 2500 (8.1L) would be adequate for up to M16 rifle protection. Even then, the Suburban's brakes would have to be upgraded from the original half-ton capacity to one-ton capacity.

For a level-three handgun pro-



AN attacker aims at the windshield.



THIS bullet-resistant battery secures vehicle owners from attackers who would aim at it.

tection—which would not entail as heavy a load for a vehicle as compared to a level 4.5 protection—the smallest vehicle that could be armored is the Nissan Cefiro as well as 2-liter engine vehicles such as the Honda CR-V.

Armoring

At the time of our visit, workmen were about to start on a Ford F150, which, as we saw, was stripped down to its shell and dashboard.

Stripping down the vehicle was necessary to completely shield the body.

For handgun protection, it takes three to four weeks to complete a vehicle's armoring. Assault rifle protection requires eight to 10 weeks.

A major challenge for the firm was armoring a new Mercedes Benz S320, which took technicians 10 weeks to armor. Villanueva said it took that long "because it was a nice and complicated vehicle. MB's principle of assembly is different from those of its Japanese counterparts."

A regular SUV could be taken apart in as short as half a day. The MB S320 took the company a week to strip down. In the process of armoring, the Exo team conducts its own test-drives to check if the vehicle could handle the modifications before proceeding with the next process.

Increasing clients

Villanueva, who was the manufacturing manager of O'Gara, recounted that from seven auto technicians during O'Gara's time, the number rose to 27 after Exo took over. Since then, clientele had risen to an average of five a month, up from just 40 vehicles a year.

He added that many motorists have resorted to the idea of armoring their vehicles. And many motorists who armor most likely would get an SUV or any large vehicle with high clearances.

Exo people explain that SUVs are more adept in getting out of dangerous situations, such as climbing over islands or ramming through other vehicles blocking their path.

"Perhaps the incidence of crimes, especially kidnappings, explains the increase in demand," he analyzed. And since politicians only account for a fifth of its business, the firm doesn't expect big busi-

ness from the 2004 elections.

Villanueva said, however, that it was only now that the firm had experienced increased demand because of politicians adding to the clientele.

"Politicians are not our No. 1 clients because they would have to answer to a lot of auditing processes and be subject to lifestyle checks. Politicians who have armored their vehicles include those who have received death threats or those who were already rich in their own right," said Villanueva.

Most Exo clients armored more than one vehicle. Villanueva was also quick to add that bulletproofing a vehicle only bought its occupants more time—enough time for them to react to the situation.

He said that for supplementary protection against more powerful weapons and explosives, a Kevlar blanket (or an anti-explosion blanket) could come in handy.

Not cheap

And armoring doesn't come cheap. The bill can be as high as \$40,000 (or P2.2 million based on P55 to \$1 exchange rate). Armoring the vehicle also virtually voids all manufacturer warranties. And all that added weight needs some getting used to in terms of speed and drivability.

"But with powerful vehicles, the added weight can hardly be felt," said Robert Saluta, sales manager.

Glass and other materials are still supplied by O'Gara, which has a plant in Colombia in South America. The Exo glass undergoes several laboratory tests, simulating worst-case scenarios. That means the glass is shot with a bullet at the highest velocity—the velocity just before the bullet exits the gun's muzzle.

Lab technicians do this by overloading the gun cartridges with more powder than normal, so that when the bullet comes in contact with the glass surface, it is traveling at exactly the muzzle velocity. Villanueva said that under normal firing conditions, a bullet's speed would decrease over distance due to air friction. As such, when an assassin shoots at a distance, the bullet would have come in contact with the glass at a lower velocity than when it exited the gun's muzzle.

Laboratory tests indicate that not even a small glass fragment penetrates the inside of the vehicle at the bullet's muzzle velocity. A sheet of tin foil pressed against the other side of the glass showed no tears on any portion.

That foil, Villanueva said, represented the occupants' skin pressed against the glass. A tear would have indicated the glass' failure. But, as it turns out, with the O'Gara glass, the tin foil always turns up spotlessly whole.

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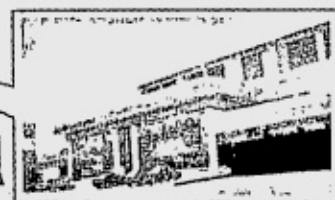
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Scooter jamboree kicks off in Subic

By Charles E. Buban

CLOSE to a thousand scooter riders from all over the country are expected to gather in Subic, Zambales, for the two-day 3rd Philippine Scooter Federation Jamboree this Saturday.

"This will be the biggest gathering of scooter enthusiasts promising a fun-filled weekend for the participants," announced Jojo Medina.

The jamboree will coincide with the Philippine Motorsports Festival, an annual event in Subic showcasing land, air and sea motorsports.

Street party

"The jamboree will be highlighted by a street party and PHM calendar girl show party at the boardwalk on Saturday evening," informed Medina.

A Caracol Festival, a celebration patterned after the Santo Niño festivals in the Visayas, will also be sponsored by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to coincide with the jamboree.

"Judging from the past two jamborees, we expect hundreds

to participate this week as members always look forward to this event," according to Medina.

The PSF boasts of having over 2,000 members, making it the largest scooter organization in the country today.

Big supporters

Emergency vehicles will be provided by scooter companies like Sym, Kymco, Sinsky and Piaggio that have been supporting the PSF in its past events.

These emergency vehicles will accompany PSF participants who will start parading from Monumento Rotunda in Calococan City at 3:30 a.m. on Nov. 22.

Participants will then register at the Caron Upper Mau Inns once they arrive in Subic.

"The jamboree is one way of showing how the scooter market has grown here in the Philippines," explained Medina.

"As we grew in number, the PSF saw the need to educate our members on scooter riding, safety and best of all community involvement," he added.

Promeda, Salazar share top honors in 4x4 media run

RAUL Promeda, head cameraman of "Motoring Today" TV show, registered the closest to "ideal trekking time" to top the men's division of the 2nd Caltex Delo 4x4 Off-Road Media Challenge recently at the Riverbanks Center in Marikina City.

Promeda drove the Nissan X-Trail, the official media 4x4 vehicle, with a time of two minutes 41.04 seconds, just 2.29 seconds shy of the targeted 2:43.33 set by the organizers in this run which is on its second year of giving media practitioners a

chance to experience off-road driving in a competitive atmosphere.

Meantime, Tessa Salazar of the INQUIRER clocked 2:37.16 to conquer the women's division in the muddy and bumpy terrain designed to also test the off-road performance of the versatile X-Trail 2.5L and 2.0L 4x4 sports utility vehicles.

Since it was not a speed contest, Salazar took it smooth and easy in the slippery corners and straights to get as close as possible to the "ideal trekking time," a format used

to emphasize safe driving and getting a feel of the track condition and enjoying the challenge and beauty of the surroundings and the SUV machine while simulating a mountain trekking activity.

Rounding out the top five male finishers are Arrin Villareal and Mart Mallari who completed a top three rout by "Motoring Today"; motoring editor Popong Andolong of Today and Jason Ang of MotionCars.com.

The women runners-up include Michelle Pritchard of Auto to Review and Manila Bulletin,

Lyn Ching-Pascual, host of GMA 7's "Unang Hirit," and Pin Pahlilanga and Nov Legayo, also of "Auto Review."

The event, which ran side by side with the Caltex Delo-Land Cruiser Club of the Philippines 4x4 Jamboree also proved the X-Trail's reliability in handling extreme off-road conditions while providing car comfort and convenience to participants.

Awards ceremony will be held during Caltex motorsports' Gathering of Champions Night at the Westin Philippine Plaza on Dec. 4.



X-TRAIL, the official vehicle of the 2nd Caltex Delo 4x4 Off-Road Media Challenge

A Rebel In The Ranks: The Nissan Frontier Titanium

THERE seems to be some unwritten rule in the world of pickups that calls for the best features to be automatically packaged as value-added accessories for the more expensive 4x4 models. 4x2 trucks, by tradition, are destined for the decidedly less glamorous role of the workhorse: utilitarian to the core, and bereft of many comforts, amenities and styling enhancements. They are the blue-collar characters, seemingly "second-class" citizens --- feature-wise --- to their hulking, all-wheel drive counterparts.

No longer.

The folks at Universal Motors Corporation have just unveiled the latest vehicle to bear the Nissan Frontier badge. Christened the Titanium, this incarnation of the 4x2 pickup seems hell bent on challenging the common conception of the species. Far removed from the bare-bones aesthetic of its class, this latest Frontier sports bodywork and features previously seen only on its 4x4 brethren --- as well as a few refinements not found on any other compact pickup in the market (4x4 or otherwise).

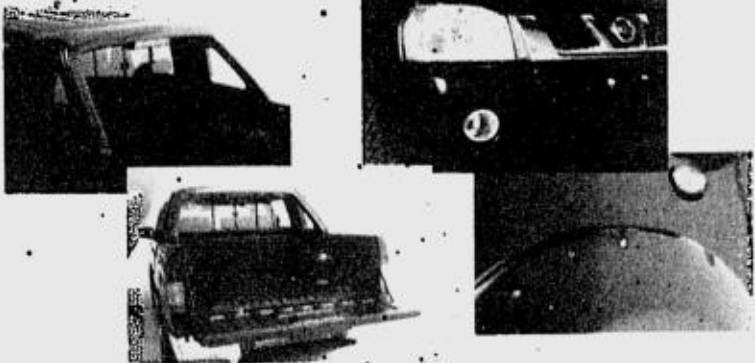
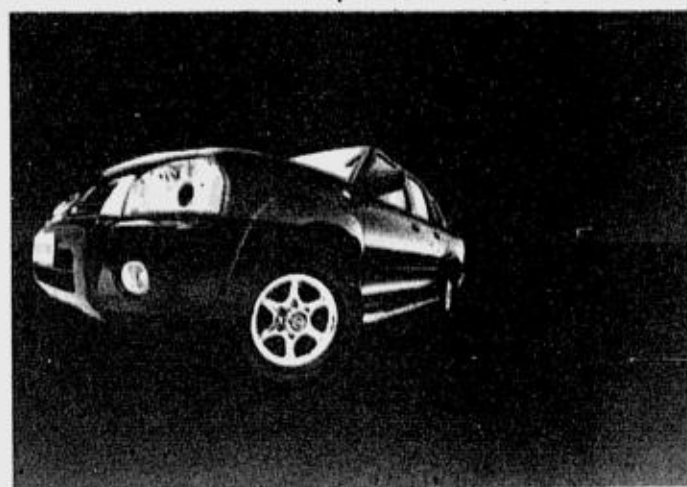
Indeed, the new Frontier appears to have been rebuilt from the ground up. Unlike conventional 4x2s that tiptoe on slender stock

tires, the Frontier Titanium seems to hunker and crouch, gripping the ground with wider 15-inch chrome-dressed radials. It cuts a bulkier, much beefier profile as well. Foglamps set into the bumper give the Titanium an even meaner face. Notched fender flares lend the appearance of broader shoulders. And aluminum side step tubes only push the industrial edge even further.

The Titanium Edition also moves the Frontier 4x2 line many rungs up the style ladder. LED signal lamps now light up the side mirrors, in a styling trend patterned after today's posh SUVs. At the center of the windshield is a rain sensor that automatically triggers the wipers at the first hint of a downpour, a first in the pickup market. Just behind the cab, you can spot the unmistakable Frontier fashion bar with integrated 3rd brake lamp, the same one that used to ride only on the 4x4 models. The truck bed itself is armored with a sprayed-on bedliner, helping prevent scratches from cargo and hinting at the Frontier 4x2s true utilitarian roots.

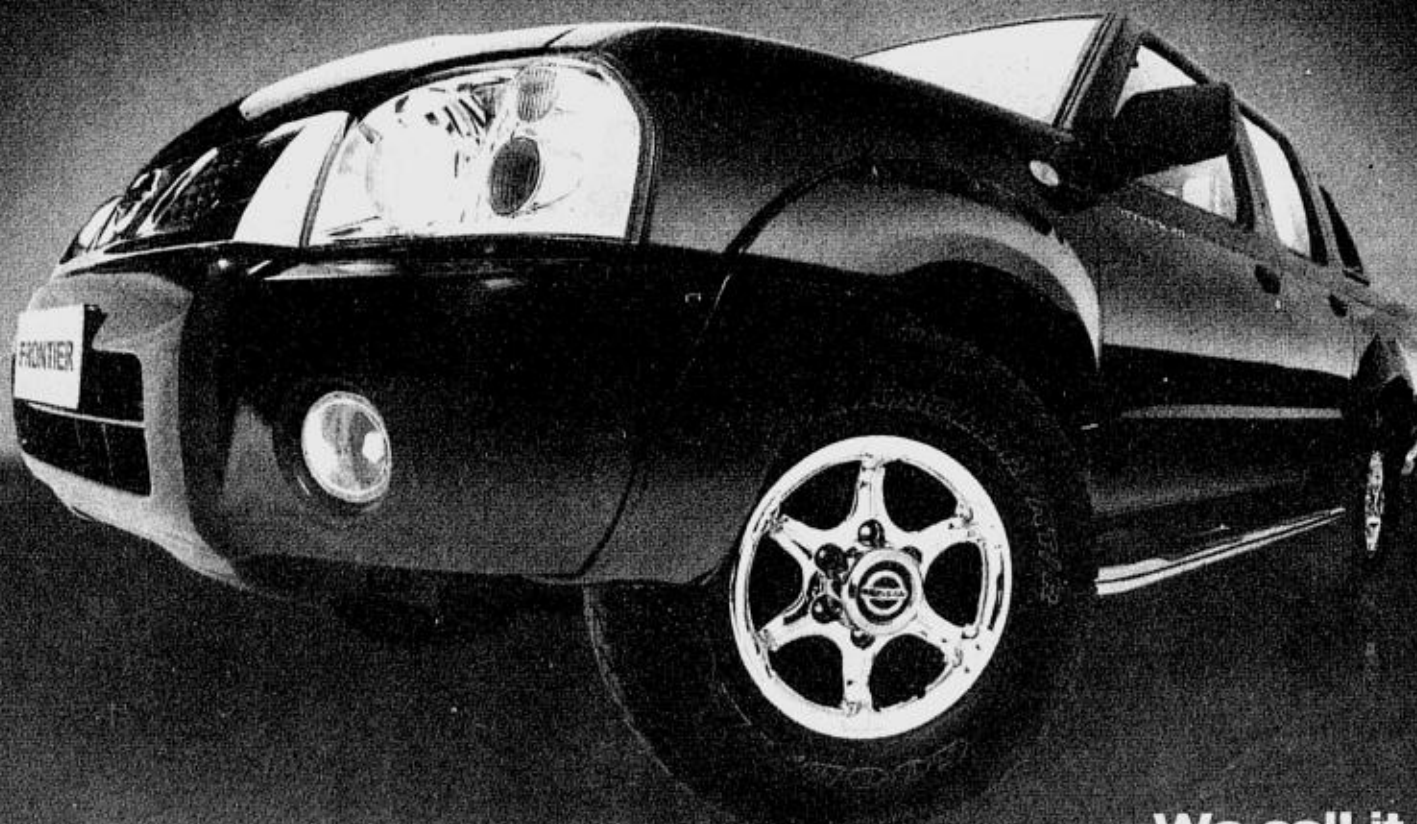
Inside the vehicle, the changes are even more marked. The cabin is replete with new features and trimmings --- the kind usually reserved for the 4-wheel drive set. Engineers seemed to have taken a few styling cues from the Frontier's US version as well, for the cabin is now dressed in scarlet-stitched leather. A brushed aluminum panel adorns the dash, drawing the eyes to the main console of the all-new Clarion audio system. Refinements were also made in the passenger area, as the rear bench now features a fold-down center armrest with dual cupholders.

The Nissan Frontier Titanium assembled and distributed by Universal Motors Corporation, is available in both manual and automatic transmission.



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Tabata-san at close range

THIS I got to tell you, buddies. Toyota did not only zap the opposition in the recent Tokyo Motor Show in the area of hi-tech vehicles and futuristic vehicles, what with its array of elegant cars and ecology-oriented, no-gas concept wonders, not to mention its newest Lexus

FULL TANK



Al Mendoza

models unwrapped to the delight of pleasantly stunned car buffs. Get this: In Tokyo, the world's fastest rising automaker has also outranked its rivals, delegates-wise. Do you know that Toyota had about 1,000 guests or so for the world's most attended motor show on Earth? Of that number, about 400 from six continents were journalists. I can't think of any reason for Toyota's overpowering display of affection for its guests other than this: If you have it, flaunt it. Surely, Toyota has got it and it's not coy to show it.

Look, from the Philippines alone, I was one among 12 journalists in Toyota's guest list, making the RP contingent the biggest delegation from the Asian region. That's how huge Toyota's respect is for this country's motoring journalists.

The other journalists invited by Japan's No. 1 automaker to the Tokyo Motor Show were from Canada, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, India, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, UK, Greece, Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Australia. No other car company can even come near to that lineup.

I am citing the figures if only to underscore once more Toyota's glaring superiority in this sometimes overlooked department in the automotive industry. By doing what it did which it usually does anyway each time the Tokyo Motor Show comes around, Toyota is reminding its rivals the power that the media wields in helping shape the future of the motoring business.

I had the rare privilege of being seated a while back on the table reserved for Nobuharu Tabata, the president of Toyota Motor Philippines. Occasion was the launch of Toyota's Triumphant Trio-Previa, Rav 4 and Prado. You guessed it right, the mastermind was Danny Isla, Toyota's adroit marketing strategist.

"Tabata-san had been wanting to have a chat with you, so please sit beside him," said Danny I. "He has practically conversed with all your colleagues on many occasions already. Now is your turn, if you don't mind?"

Now who am I to refuse Danny I, the Lord of Prediction during our Beatlemaniac nights at Roppongi? I lost some sushi money during the two times that Danny I had correctly predicted which song The Silver Beats' of The Cavern in Roppongi would sing first—Act Naturally and Strawberry Fields Forever. To this day, my wallet remains unreplenished and I'm dying to eat sushi again at Saisaki.

I learned from Tabata-san that he has had stints in the United States and Jakarta. Very, very fruitful, according to the 55-year-old Toyota pillar, who has worked all his life at Toyota right after his graduation from college 33 years ago.

"I worked five years in America and next got assigned in Jakarta lasting five years again," said Tabata-san, very trim and fit-looking like Brad Pitt. "Then I was transported here. Once you got hired by Toyota, you become a Toyota man all your life."

Trained basically as a marketing man, Tabata-san soon engineered the big turnaround for Toyota to regain supremacy of the local automotive industry in no time.

I asked Tabata-san the same question I had hurled at Toyota Motor Corp.'s top honcho, Fujio Cho, during the grand dinner with Toyota's bigwigs in Tokyo: "When will Toyota go full blast in China?"

"The ground rules are being put in place already," said Tabata-san. "We are already there. It will only be a matter of time before we can go all-out in China."

Told that Toyota has now almost overtaken, if not surpassed already, Ford to become second behind GM in the world auto industry, Tabata-san smiled broadly and said: "Well, modesty aside, we are going toward the direction of being No. 1 in the world. Maybe by 2010, we could be on top of the world. Even earlier than that perhaps?"

If that should happen, I won't be surprised.

My felicitations to Isuzu for launching recently the Direct Injection Diesel Up! Lasting up to Dec. 20, the project, which is in partnership with Total, will highlight a series of activities to reinforce the superiority of Isuzu's direct injection diesel engine, such as Di Diesel Up! Kilometer Log Face-Off Contest, Di Diesel Up! Stick-On GIG, Di Diesel Up! Trivia and Di Diesel Up! Driving Clinic.

Contests have been lined up and Isuzu owners can get their application forms from dealerships nationwide. A top prize of P20,000, plus many more Isuzu goodies, await winners.

Art Balmadrid, if not Myrna Gonzales, will be more than willing to distribute the giveaways and major prizes to participating Isuzu vehicle owners.

QUOTE ME: The new Honda Civic can compare with the world's best in its category. Go test-drive it now and become a believer like me.



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Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on Auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in this section.

DO aftermarket ignition wires produce more horsepower?

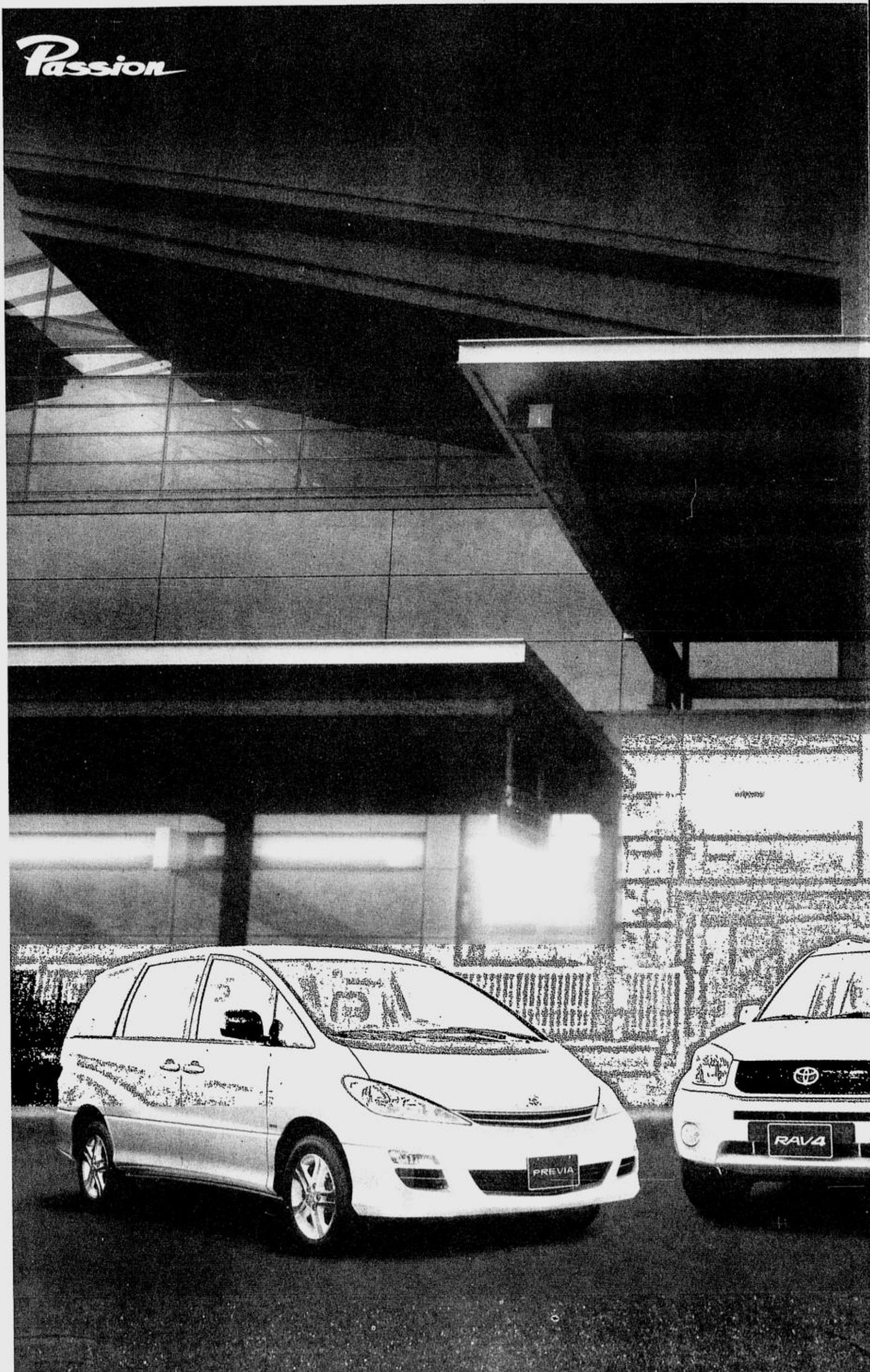
—Ferdinand Benjamin S. Co of Subic, Zambales

Despite what some marketers may claim, ignition wires are only conductors and by themselves can't generate or create additional engine horsepower. Good ignition wires are needed to conduct full ignition coil energy to the spark plugs without interfering with a vehicle's electronic engine management system. If the vehicle's ignition wires are poorly designed or have deteriorated—the potential overall performance of the vehicle is no longer available to the driver.

Professional race car drivers do not use aftermarket ignition wires to increase horsepower—they use them to maintain full engine horsepower. While in a race, you could end up losing or decreasing horsepower if your wires' conductors fail to conduct the spark energy needed to fire spark

plug gaps, or EMI emitted from spark plug wires causes the engine management computer to react abnormally, or so much spark energy is lost into the ground straps of so-called "built-in capacitor" wires that little is left to fire the spark plug gaps. To eliminate the risk of having these events happening, successful race teams turn to their trusted brand of aftermarket ignition wires.

There are some cases wherein stock car owners claim that engine performance increased after they fitted aftermarket ignition wires. However, in reality, performance increases because the engine's potential power was previously restrained by several factors. It could simply be that the previous ignition wires had failing conductors or were interfering with the engine's electronics.



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Looking forward to the Lexus

THE MOST exciting buzz from the recently concluded 37th Tokyo Motor Show is that Toyota Motor Corp. may launch its premium luxury brand, the Lexus, in Manila in 2004, one year ahead of its scheduled debut in Japan.

The possibility of Lexus entering the luxury car market in the Philippines could be part of Toyota's plan to make it a global brand. To highlight the projected global branding of the Lexus, futuristic concepts of the car, the LF-S (Lexus Future Sedan) and the LF-X (Lexus Future crossover X), were displayed prominently on individual revolving platforms at the Tokyo Motor Show.

Since the first Lexus was unveiled in the United States in 1989, it has become identified as a US brand. Lexus eventually outsold Mercedes-Benz and BMW in the US even as various Lexus models in their "Passionate Pursuit of Perfection" swept the prestigious J.D. Power and Associates awards for initial quality, vehicle dependability, long-term vehicle quality, long-term dependability, customer

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

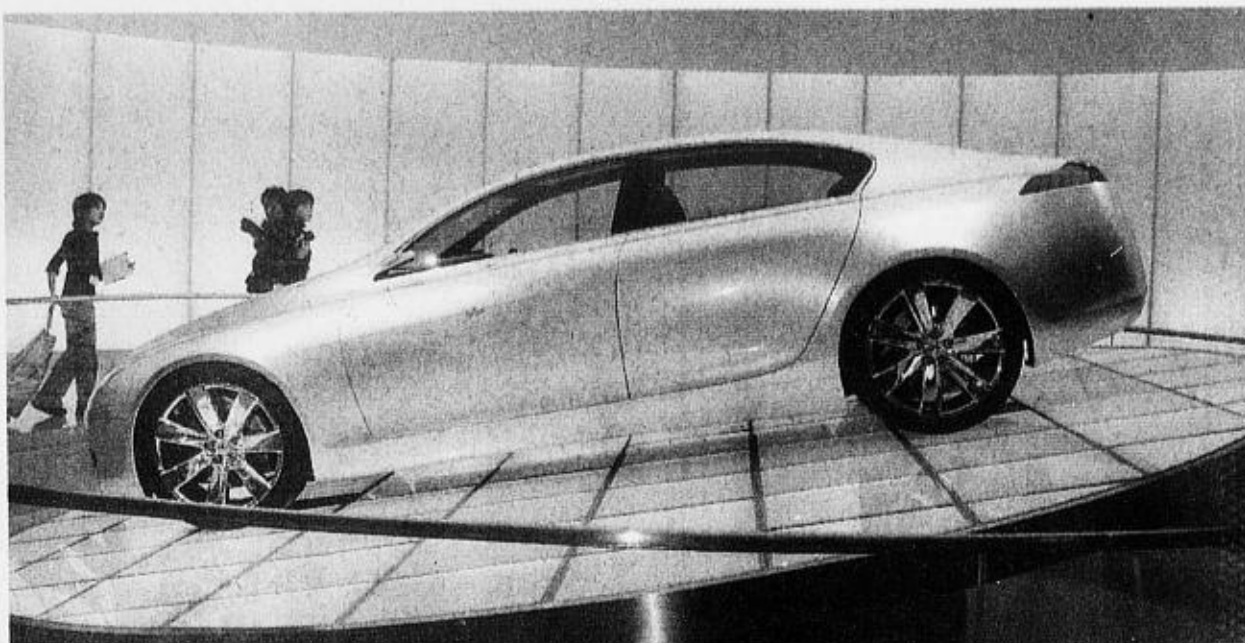


satisfaction and APEAL (Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout) year after year.

Last July, Lexus was the top nameplate for the ninth straight year ever since it was eligible for inclusion in J.D. Powers' Vehicle Dependability Study.

Award-winning

Ironically enough, although the award-winning Lexus is manufactured in Japan for export to North America, it was never sold in its home country. Toyota only sold similar models such as the Harrier, Windom and Cel-sior in Japan. Now Toyota is setting up a nationwide network of 150 Lexus outlets in



THE LF-S (Lexus Future Sedan) was prominently displayed at the Tokyo Motor Show.

PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA



Japan to open in 2005. Last September, in Cambridge, Ontario, Canada, Toyota inaugurated the first Lexus assembly line outside Japan with an all-new 2004 model RX 330 sport utility vehicle (SUV) the first to roll off the line. The RX 330 AWD (all-wheel-drive) V6 is one of five SUVs in the Lexus stable.

Earlier this year, the RX 330 replaced the RX 300, which was the first SUV to be named Sport/Utility of the Year by Motor Trend magazine in 1998.

The other Lexus SUVs are the RX 330 FWD (front-wheel-drive) V6, the in-line 6-cylinder rear-wheel-drive (RWD) IS 300 SportCross, the mid-size five-passenger GX 470 AWD V8 (with optional third-row seating for eight-passenger capacity), and the biggest Lexus, the eight-passenger LX 470 AWD V8. All are equipped with five-speed automatic transmission.

Flagship

The passenger cars bearing Toyota's luxury marque are led by the flagship LS 430 five-passenger sedan, "the pinnacle of Lexus luxury and technology," powered by a 4.3-liter twin cam V8 Variable Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i) engine mated to a six-speed automatic transmission. This year, for the seventh consecutive year, the LS 430 was named the most problem-free vehicle in the J.D. Power and Associates' Initial Quality Study and for the ninth consecutive year, won the most problem-free car award after three years of ownership.

(Before the LS 430 replaced the LS 400, the latter bagged this award.)

The other Lexus passenger cars are the GS 430 V8 RWD sedan, the GS 300 in-line six-cylinder RWD, the ES 330 V6 front-wheel-drive (FWD), the SC 430 V8 RWD four-passenger convertible and two IS 300 models: the in-line six RWD with manual transmission (MT) and the in-line six RWD with AT.

All Lexus cars are five-passenger and have five-speed AT except for the six-speed LS 430 and the IS 300 MT.

Best 4x4

But the Lexus is not only about luxury, style and advanced technology. Lexus SUVs are tough, as proven by the GX 470 winning the 2003 4x4 of the year competition of 4-Wheel and Off Road magazine. The GX 470 bested six Fords (Expedition, Explorer, Excursion, F-250 Super Duty, Fx4 Ranger and Fx4 F-150), the Chevrolet Silverado 1500, Jeep Wrangler, Hummer H2, GMC Yukon XL, Dodge Ram HD 3500, Dodge Ram 2500, Kia Sorrento and Toyota 4Runner in this year's grueling 1,000-mile test covering a variety of on- and off-road terrain. The magazine editor said that the advances in drivetrain control and performance of the GX 470's suspension, engine, transmission and transfer case along with a high technology quotient helped it excel in this 4x4 test that has been run annually for 21 years now.

Given all these facts, excited car buffs are wondering which Lexus vehicle Toyota will launch in Manila next year to replace the long-gone Toyota Crown as its top-of-the-line luxury car. Will it be the flagship LS 430 V8 sedan or the 4x4 award-winning GX 470? The suspense builds up as 2004 approaches and hopes soar for the arrival of "The Passionate Pursuit of Perfection."

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Time is what keeps everything happening at once.

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.)



A SIDE view of the LF-X (Lexus Future crossover X) at the 37th Tokyo Motor Show



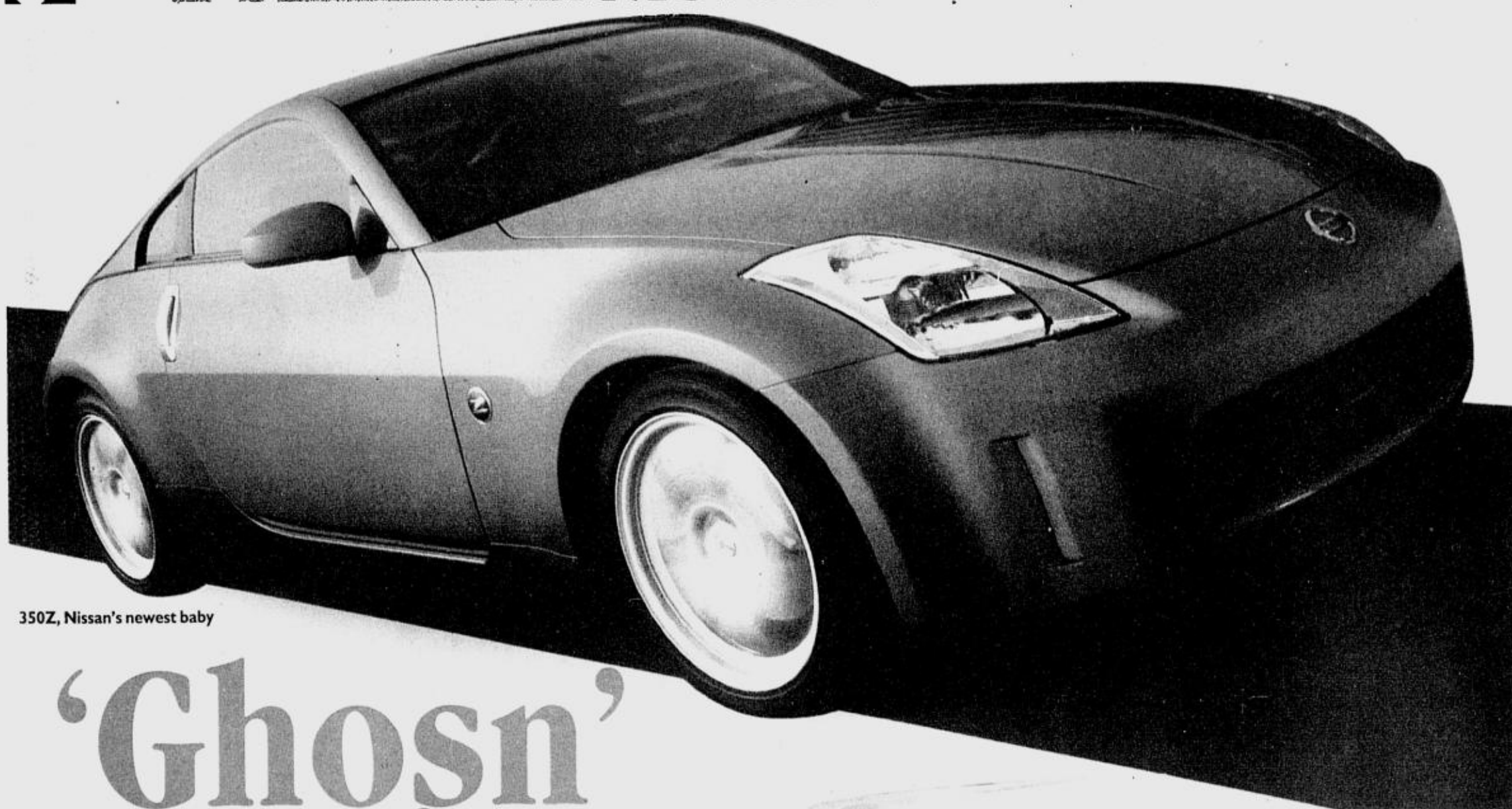
THE LF-X with doors open

Good looks run in the family.

Next gen RAV4, Previa, Prado.

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350Z, Nissan's newest baby

'Ghosn' out of the rut, into the 'Zeeee'

By Tessa R. Salazar

YEARS of anticipation, all justified in one turn." Such is a borrowed quote but one that really captured what I felt while I was inside Nissan's trophy car. Just a year ago, I was a spectator when car reviewers from the first world showered Nissan that unfamiliar attention and raved about the 350Z as if a 2-year-old boy just painted a masterpiece.

Seasoned test drivers raved about its steering, torque (it pumps out 363 nM of it at low revs), brilliant acceleration, and terrific handling. They observed it could punch out more than 287 horses to its rear wheels from its 3.5-liter V6 engine. With a drag coefficient of just .29, and 0-60 mph in 5.4 seconds (or approximately 100 kph), it was said to be at par with class rivals such as the BMW Z4 and the Porsche Boxster.

And yet, the 350Z was a steal. One car reviewer said it was only a few ponies shy of the power found in a Porsche 911, which cost two and half times as much.

Face to face with the 350Z

All this hype, of course, intrigued the Filipino public, even more so the local motoring journalists. It was in this kind of atmosphere that I came face to face with the 350Z at the Nissan Sta. Rosa Laguna plant just recently.

The version presented to me was the automatic, and as I slid into the driver's seat, I noticed the seat's "wing" that was meant to keep me in place when turning sharp corners or aggressively changing gears. Now here was a car who knew what kind of driver it would have and hold.

The instrument panel had been noticeably laid out for a demanding driver. I touched the smooth arches of the steering wheel, and no-



LEE and his new baby

The very symbol of Nissan's 180-degree 'handbrake' turnaround is in RP

ticed the cruise controls patiently waiting just inside the circle. I knew all too well, though, that cruise controls were inappropriate in Philippine roads.

Running the brute

Nissan bigwigs allowed me to run the brute for only 1.6 kilometers and they didn't want to put too many numbers on the trip meter.

So, I had to make the most of it. Now, would the owner look at the tire wear? I wouldn't think so. So, barely flooring the gas pedal, the beast blasted off to 160 kph in 10 seconds, the tachometer's needle almost touching 7,000 rpm. During acceleration, the hair at the nape of my neck stood, while about 2Gs of force pressed down my chest.

It was hard to keep track of the gears shifting, but my companion inside the car (NMPI communications top man Raymond Tribdino) faithfully kept track. The first gear put us on pace to 60 kph, the second pushed us to 120, and the third put us at 180. Unfortunately, by the time we were on third, our distance was up, and the engines dejectedly revved down. But if we used the teponic, we could have reached a mind-blowing 230 kph.

So this is what the modern version of the Datsun 240Z felt like, the sports car that was said to have set the world on its ear in 1970.

But more than being a new version of anything, the 350Z is the very symbol of the 180-degree turnaround of the once ailing Nissan.

Corporate miracle

It took a Brazilian-born and ex-head of Renault to do the trick. The "Le cost cutter" came and awakened Nissan from its coma in the

late 1990s. Carlos Ghosn (pronounced "Gawn") performed a corporate miracle and transformed Nissan from being an underdog to an emerging top dog.

Among other things, he is said to have cut the fat of the cartels that monopolized the car industry—in the process revolutionizing the manufacturing process in Japan.

Ghosn has set out to create not just one, or two, or three showpiece models with cutting-edge automotive designs, but 22 new ones to be introduced in three years. The 350Z is just one of those models. Along with this, he plans to position Nissan as the leading car manufacturer in Europe.

Adjudged the most significant car in the 2000 Tokyo Motor Show, the 350Z was able to shift the market in favor of Nissan, particularly in the United States—its biggest and most important market outside Japan.

The total sales for the first 10 months from this year alone shows 30,000 units have been sold in the United States. Shipments to Europe and Asia are about to start.

In the Philippines, the 350Z is now available with the 5-speed automatic transmission with manual shift lock, and the 6-speed manual transmission—on a three-year warranty. These models have 3.5-L VQ direct ignition engine, and have the same engine and drivetrains as those in the United States.

At the recent Tokyo Motor Show, Ghosn told Nissan's global overseas market (Taiwan, China, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia) that the future of Nissan wasn't going to be in North America, Japan, or Europe. It would be in the global

overseas market. "Therefore," he challenged the Nissan staff, "You must not fail me."

RP's 'fireman'

Enter the "fireman" of the Philippines. Known as Nissan's troubleshooter, Singaporean Leman C.C. Lee (an unassuming president and CEO in his early 40s who looks not a day older than 30) shares the same corporate sensibilities of Ghosn. Those who work for Lee, who came into town this March, say that like Ghosn, he is not an easy man to please. More specifically, they say Lee likes challenge.

An engineer by profession, Lee describes himself as a man of details, but one who would give enough working space for his subordinates. He reasons that giving a free hand for subordinates would make them think more and work more willingly, making room for more creativity and forward thought.

Lee prefers to save on operational costs rather than scrimp on customer service, efficiency and dealer support.

"It is not the cost, but the principle. It's like spending P1 million if it's going to do something good for the company but not spending P100 if it's going to be a waste of money," he said.

Confidence booster

He doesn't expect the 350Z to sell like hotcakes here. It is, after all, a "niche" car meant for moneyed sports car fanatics who want to experience the "Zeeee" effect like their foreign counterparts. The prohibitive price tag of P3.9 million guarantees exclusivity.

After turning off the engines and leaving the 350Z, I wondered if its presence alone would make the industry forget a recent issue involving some of a few batches of its popular Nissan Sentra model 1.5 and 1.6 between May 2001 and July 2002.

For that, only time will tell. There is no doubt, however, that the formal entry of the 350Z this month would be a perfect confidence booster for a reawakened giant. As they say, what defines an automaker's character is not how it can build an untainted image, but how honest it can be to its public, and how gracefully it can stand up after stumbling. Nissan did so a few years ago. There's no reason it can't now.



350Z on a closed course



JAGUAR S-Type

Jaguar achieves record-breaking sales

JAGUAR is celebrating its highest-ever monthly sales total with 15,613 cars sold worldwide in September. This is the highest number of cars sold in a single month in the 83-year history of the company. Jaguar also achieved an all-time monthly sales record in the UK and the United States.

Record sales figures in the UK were fueled by the continued strong performance of the recently launched all-aluminum XJ range. The new XJ dominated its segment again in September, setting 830 units—equivalent to the combined sales of its nearest

competitors, BMW 7 Series and Mercedes S-Class.

The S-Type also achieved its highest monthly sales volume this year, up 4.4 percent compared with September last year. As a result, Jaguar achieved its best month ever in the UK with 6,203 vehicles sold, up 19.1 percent against September 2002 figures.

In the United States, Jaguar's largest global market, the company achieved its best-ever September performance, with sales of 6,030 cars, an increase of 43 percent over the same month last year. Sales of the X-Type in the

US reached 3,324 cars last month, up 63 percent in September 2002, while the XJ flagship saloon achieved sales of 1,020 cars, an increase of 75 percent over the same month last year.

Commenting on the company's sales performance, Mike Wright, Jaguar's managing director, said: "Last year, Jaguar recorded its fifth consecutive record sales year, reflecting the company's dramatic product-led transformation. This year, in an increasingly competitive market environment, important new models like the all-new aluminum XJ flagship saloon are

major factors in attracting new customers."

With the implementation of the new Excise Tax Law in the Philippines, the entire range of Jaguar vehicles, including all variants of the top-selling XJ line, is now locally available at much more attractive prices from Jaguar Cars Inc., the sole authorized distributor of Jaguar in the Philippines. The Jaguar Makati showroom is located at the ground floor, Enzo Building, 399 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City and the Jaguar Ortigas showroom is located on ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

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ROASTED
Pigeon with
Grilled Duck
Liver

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Wild over French game,
Chinese seafood
and Angeles 'halo-halo'Chef Cyrille Soenen's repertoire for the ongoing Wild Game
Festival at the Prince Albert, Hotel InterCon is to die for

THE GIFT of family and true friends, a job that one truly loves and, last but not the least, a splendid meal with an exquisite glass of wine. In the end, these are the only things that truly matter. Lately, I've been blessed with all these and much more.

KITCHEN
RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

Not many moons ago, I was privileged enough to work with the best French chef in the Philippines, if you ask me, perhaps in all of Asia: Cyrille Soenen, the Inter-Con's chef executive. Together, we did a French Filipino Fusion Festival and my respect and admiration for him has not ceased since.

When Cyrille cooks, it's always a feast for a king. And his repertoire for the ongoing Wild Game Festival at the Prince Albert is no exception.

Orgasmic

All you pan-fried foie gras freaks are simply going to have to give it up for the most wonderful Terrine de Canard Colvert et Foie Gras de Canard (Duck Colvert and Foie Gras Terrine). It melts in your mouth plus you can finish the flavors off with a sweet sip of chilled Domaine Sergent Petit Manseng 2001.

The only word that comes to mind to describe the experience is orgasmic! If I have to put a wager of the little that I own, I'll gamble it all on this one! Gets even better, it's a mere P600.

Our lunch progressed to more exotic flavors, Hare a la Royale with Garnitures, Medallion of Hind with Fricassee of Autumn Fruits, Roasted Pigeon with Grilled Duck Liver. All excellent in character and flavor, flown in from France at season's prime. It was an afternoon to remember, made even more memorable by the conversation and the memories of times shared!

My friendship with this great French master is one that I'll always treasure. As they say, the best things in life are free, but though his friendship comes free, please bring cash and or a credit card to sample his culinary masterpieces. Duck liver and wild French game are, after all, quite expensive! The Game promotion will be on till the weekend, don't miss it! And to you, *mon ami* Cyrille, kudos!

Side trip to China

From France I took a trip bound for China. I landed in Ortigas and found myself in a restaurant called China Club to celebrate the birthday of a dear friend, Miriam Balingit. From the hunting grounds of France, my taste buds took a turn to the savor the best of what the sea could offer. Fresh *suahe* with one of the yummiest dipping sauces I've ever tasted. The four mushrooms with sea asparagus, lobsters in garlic, fish lips, steamed grouper and braised pork with fried bread were equally good. I had a grand time in quaint China Club, thanks to the owners Louie Co and Willy Uy. Great seafood and grand wine list at affordable prices!

Mixed blessings

It didn't all end in China. As has been my principle in life, I went in search of my happiness.

WILD/D2



CHEF Cyrille Soenen

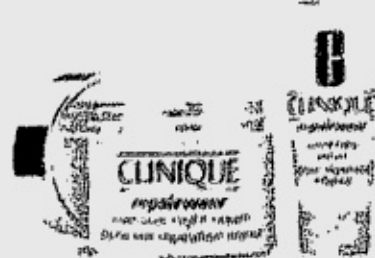


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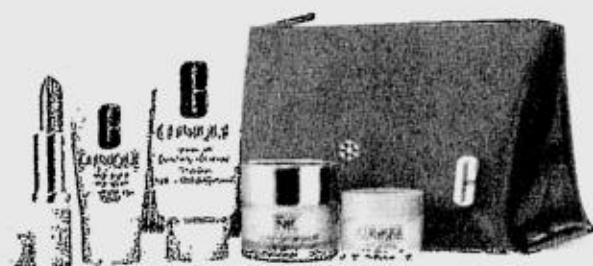


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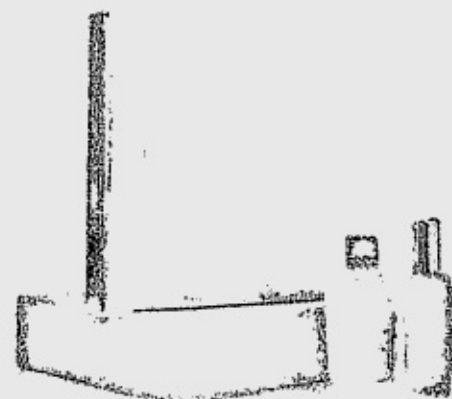
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Wild over French game, Chinese seafood and Angeles 'halo-halo'

From page D1

ness and found it in Angeles, Pampanga—Corazon's Halo-Halo! Fresh beans, corn, macapuno and bananas sweetened to perfection with whole chunks of *pastillas de leche*. Need I say more?

I've never really been a halo-halo freak; I found those I've tried to taste more of one thing or the other, none of which ever really melded greatly in flavor. It either tasted much like bananas or ube or of another thing. If you ask me, this is my personal choice for the best halo-halo! Thanks to the family of the late Tom Naguiat, for introducing me to Corazon's halo-halo and grudgingly, for the excess baggage that I now carry around the hips!

Where can I buy sun-dried tomatoes in Manila. I've been looking around but can't find them. I chanced upon a duty free store in Clark but what they have there is bottled sun-dried tomatoes soaked in liquid. Also, would you happen to have a simple pasta recipe that uses sun-dried tomatoes and some herbs.

MIKE

Sun-dried tomatoes are available everywhere—Rustan's, Unimart, Santis, Terry's. I personally like using sun-dried tomatoes in oil, especially for pasta. And of course, I have a great, delicious and simple recipe for you.

Buon appetito!
3 tbsp olive oil
½ kilo large shrimp, peeled, deveined
¼ c shallots, sliced
¾ c sliced drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
2 tbsp chopped garlic

1 c canned tomatoes, drained, seeded and chopped
½ cup chopped fresh basil
crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
salt and pepper, to taste
300-350 g cooked pasta, preferably spaghetti

Heat oil, add shrimp and sauté until it changes color, remove shrimps from pan, set aside. Add all ingredients except the canned tomatoes. Sauté until shallots are translucent. Add canned tomatoes and simmer until sauce thickens. Add basil.

Return shrimp and any juices to sauce; stir to heat through. Add pasta to sauce. Toss over medium heat until sauce coats pasta. Season with salt, pepper and pepper flakes. Garnish



HARE a la Royale with Garnitures



DUCK Colvert and Foie Gras Terrine

with basil.

Series of questions from Mark

They say that the secret to a delectable Tiramisu is in its cheese, how true?

Very true! Aside from Santi's, where can I buy Mascarpone cheese? Is it possible to buy Mascarpone that is not expensive? Have tried some Tiramisu which didn't use the said cheese and it didn't taste quite as good though.

I am not certain if there is a brand of mascarpone other than Galbani available in the Philippines. Santis/Werdenberg are the direct importers of the brand. However, I've seen Galbani mascarpone in Rustan's and Unimart. Sorry, but as I've always said, the best dishes come from the finest ingredients, and the finest and freshest ingredients are, sad to say, almost always quite expensive!

A bit of Mascarpone trivia: This butter-rich triple cream cheese comes from Italy's Lombardy region. It's cheese made from cows milk and has a very delicate flavor. It is usually served with fruit and most popularly known as the base ingredient for pick me up, the literal translation for Tiramisu.

And my answer... Once a fake, always a fake! Tiramisu made from anything other than mascarpone will always look, smell and taste like a fake!

Also, I tried doing your New York Style Cheesecake and it tasted good. However, I noticed some lumps even before popping it into the oven, how do I get rid of it? What brand of cream cheese did you use?

To ensure that your cakes are lump free, I suggest that you beat the cheese in the mixer with a wire whisk for a good 10 minutes. Another suggestion would be not to overbeat the egg whites and to gently but thoroughly fold it in into the cream mixture. I suggest you use Philadelphia cream cheese

Too much fat in food, and other consumer concerns

DO we really have nutrition-safety experts checking the amount of fat in a lot of consumer products in the market? A diet high in fat, as we know from our basic nutrition information, is one of the leading causes of life-threatening diseases such as coronary ailments and cancers, particularly of the colon, prostate and breast.

And yet, most of the top-selling products in the market like corned beef and meat loaf are practically swimming in fat. Add to that the favorite *longganizas*, *tapas* and *tocinos* made from the most fatty portions of meat cuts. The list is endless if we include fast-food fare and street food.

Street food, as we recently found out, is a nutritionist's nightmare. We checked the viands served by neighborhood street-food vendors and found out that most of the dishes that were served every day were topped by inches of liquid fat. Furthermore, various cuts of white fat were indispensable ingredients in many dishes.

We also found out that hamburger patties sold by food vendors were made of ground pork meat instead of beef. To give patties the taste and aroma of real hamburgers, suet of beef is used for deep-frying.

Outlaw fat in processed food? You must be kidding. As the food vendors said, "Customers like their food swimming in fat."

Laoag visitor has unsavory impression

This letter from April Cinco is a wake-upper to health and sanitation officials of Laoag City. A first-time visitor to the North, she was impressed by the city signage "Welcome to the cleanest and greenest component city." She also looked forward to having a taste of the famous special Laoag *empanada*. (The batter is made of rice flour and the filling is a special mixture of local *longganiza*, egg and grated papaya or monggo bean sprout.)

Her good impressions turned into a disappointment, however, when she saw how two street vendors violated sanitary standards when they prepared the special *empanada*.

Cinco wrote: "The ingredients were placed in uncovered containers that were washed along the street. The vendor mixed the ingredients with bare hands, untrimmed, but nail-polished at that. Sensing my discomfort, my host brought me to another vendor, this time near the market. I was even more disappointed to see roaches behind the vendor who seemed unmindful of the pests."

"I am writing this, not just to create awareness on the need for a more sanitary food handling in Laoag City, but also throughout the country. If we cannot prepare *empanadas* the clean way, what else can we offer better?"

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron



Friendly reminder to customer service

In case the customer service people of Smart have forgotten, we are reminding them about the reader's complaint we sent them last Oct. 13.

Reader Aurora Y. Hizon was interested in Smart's Talk 'N Text SIM upgrade, a promo that offered to double the memory of a phone directory and message box. Instead of doubling the memory, however, the supposed upgrade "deleted precious stored messages, and the entire phone directory was gone."

But, to add insult to injury, Smart's customer service denied that a transaction between them had transpired. Realizing, maybe, that a receipt could prove the transaction, the store clerk promised that she'd consult with her supervisor.

Hizon wrote to us last Nov. 3: "I was just wondering what happened to my complaint. I guess we've given them enough time since you forwarded my complaint to them last Oct. 13."

Action, at long last!

Candy Varona (cvarona@yahoo.com) wrote: "This is a feedback to the complaint I wrote to you last Oct. 18. Manila Water Company Inc. finally fixed the leak yesterday, Nov. 4, after nearly three months of constant follow-up."

From Lagrimas L. Galang comes this news: "Thank you for publishing my sister T. Luntok's story 'Retiree Loses Bank Savings' last Aug. 7. It took all of six months, but finally, the bank made restitution on their employee's malfeasance."

(Five years ago, former schoolteacher T. Luntok deposited her entire retirement pay in a bank and entrusted the account to a bank employee. When she needed her savings for medical needs last year, she discovered too late that the bank employee had "emptied" her savings deposit and had resigned from the bank. She is now 70 years old, blind and sickly.)

Luntok's sister L. Galang represented her in seeking restitution from the bank. She asked, "How did the bank employee manipulate my sister's account without the bank becoming aware of it? And, how did the employee get clearance from the bank at the end of her employment?"

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph

ILUSTRADO presents Taste of Australia, a beef and wine festival until Nov. 30. Menu includes Australian Striploin with Mushroom Ragout, Herb-marinated Australian Beef Topside, Australian Beef Thick Flank a la Rosa and Australian Beef Oyster Blade en Croute. Ilustrado is located along Calle Real del Palacio. Call 5273674/5272319.

ITALIANNI'S Restaurant offers Christmas baskets like Bread and Wine Basket for P1,200 and P1,600; Assorted Cheesecake Tartlet Box, P750; Assorted Muffins box, P450. Italianni's is located at Greenbelt 2, Glorietta IV, Alabang Town Center and SM City Bicutan.

DINING OUT

KITCHEN, located at Megamall and Greenbelt 3, Makati, features appetizers, soups, salads, pasta and noodles, sandwiches, rice bowls, desserts, drinks, coffee and tea and alcoholic beverages. Call 7574565/7574566 (Greenbelt) and 6874232/6378025 (Megamall).

KAI Japanese restaurant, located at Greenbelt 2, Makati, offers appetizers, salads, soups, seafood, vegetarian, meat and poultry dishes, sushi, sashimi and vegetarian maki.

EDSA SHANGRI-LA'S Summer Palace offers prawn specials until Nov. 30. The menu includes cold prawn salad with mangoes, stewed king prawns with sauteed kohlrabi, wok fried prawns with squid or egg white, sliced prawns Szechuan style, black pepper prawns in hot pot, prawns with Ho Fan noodles in chili oil, deep-fried prawns in ginger sauce, steamed prawns with sotanghon noodles and Xiao Xing wine.

The Lobby Lounge presents Berries

SORABOL Korean restaurant recently opened at Robinsons Place Manila's Taste Buds. Its menu includes vegetarian, stir-fried dishes, appetizers, and noodles.



BURGEOO American Bar and Restaurant features The Best in the West Christmas offerings which include Gambas Al Ajillo, Seafood Jambalaya, Shrimp and Ribs Platter, Grilled Steak ala Pobre. BURGEOO is located at 310 Tomas Morato Extension, South Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City; 2/L The Podium, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City; and the 3/L Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City. Call 9277424, 8981815 to 16 or 6875254.

High Tea until Nov. 30. The buffet features orange and cranberry cobbler, strawberries with mint and jasmine tea syrup, maple cheesecake with blueberry topping, raspberry chocolate cream with French meringue, mini Pavlova with winterberries and cream, mini strawberry horseshoe with white fondant and Muscat jelly with blackberries. Call 6347373/6338888.

PIZZA HUT introduces the rectangular-shaped Sicilian Pizza. It has garlic, basil and oregano baked into the crust. It comes in a light and fluffy crust inside, crisp and crunchy on the outside.

RICHMONDE HOTEL presents holiday

goodies like chicken galantine, honey roasted pork, fish piccata with tomato basil sauce, stuffed porkloin with apricots and dates, baked mussels, hickory pork spareribs, lechon, prime rib carving, fruit cake, cinnamon twist loaf, banana walnut bread, cinnamon roll, Vienna brownies, plain and ube ensaymada and Day's Dream chocolate until Dec. 31. Call 6387777.

TRADERS HOTEL Manila will hold a Christmas eve buffet dinner (Dec. 24), Christmas day buffet lunch and dinner (Dec. 25) and New Year's Day special lunch and dinner (Jan. 1, 2004). Call 5279107/5277011.

MAKATI SHANGRI-LA celebrates Thanksgiving on Nov. 27 at Island Cafe. The restaurant will serve an international lunch and dinner buffet. Call 8400884.

DUSIT HOTEL Nikko features Hanoi's Best until Nov. 21 at Thien Duong Vietnamese Restaurant. The festival offers spring rolls, prawn soup with coconut milk, grilled duck salad, grilled pork with sesame seed served with black sticky rice and grilled beef with lemon-grass. The hotel also presents Promenade of Autumn until Nov. 30 at Benkay Japanese restaurant. Nine dishes are served ala carte. Call 8673333.

SHAKY'S offers party meal packages. Call or visit any Shakey's restaurant.

Christmas goodies to bake

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

FOR sure by now a lot of us already have our Christmas list—who to give, what to give, budget per recipient, not to mention a menu for Christmas Eve.

Here we have goodies to bake and pack for gift-giving—a fruity macaroon, an apple cake to take advantage of the abundance of apples and a buttery fruit cake.

Roll up your sleeves, don an apron and start baking. These goodies will surely surprise family and friends. Happy baking!

Coconut Pineapple Bites

200-g pack desiccated coconut
300-ml can full-cream condensed milk
½ c melted butter
1 c white sugar
4 whole eggs
1 c canned crushed pineapple, well drained

Preheat the oven to 325 °F. Line 60 mini muffin molders with baking paper. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, pour all of the ingredients in the order given above. Mix well with a wooden spoon or wire whisk. Using a spoon or pastry bag, distribute the macaroon batter equally among the prepared molders.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the molders immediately and allow to cool in a wire rack.

Apple Quickbread

3 c coarsely chopped green apples
3 c sifted all-purpose flour
1 c white sugar
1 ½ c dark brown sugar
1 ¼ c corn oil

4 whole eggs
2 tsp cinnamon powder
1 tsp vanilla
1 ½ tsp fine salt
1 ½ tsp sifted baking soda
½ tsp baking powder
2/3 c raisins

Topping

1 c whole walnuts or blanched pili nuts

Preheat oven to 350 °F. Line the bottoms of six mini loaf pans measuring 3 x 6 inches (2 ½ inches high) with baking paper. Grease the sides of the pan with shortening. Dust the greased areas with flour and tap off excess. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, pour the ingredients for the apple bread in the order given above. Mix well with a rubber scraper until blended. Divide the cake batter equally among the prepared molders. Decorate the top with nuts and bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of each loaf comes out clean.

Allow the cake to age for a full 24 hours before serving. Keep chilled.

No-Molasses Fruit Cake

4 c sifted all-purpose flour
2 tsp sifted baking powder
½ tsp fine salt
2 c glazed fruits
2 c raisins, rinsed
¾ c butter, softened
1 tsp orange extract
2 c white sugar
5 whole eggs

Soaking Syrup

¼ c butter
1/3 c white sugar
2 tbsp water
1 tbsp dark rum

Preheat the oven to 325 °F. Line the bottoms of six mini loaf pans measuring 3 x 6

inches (2 ½ inches high) with baking paper. Grease the sides of the pan with shortening. Dust the greased areas with flour. Tap off excess and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt, glazed fruits and raisins. Set aside.

In another large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer on high speed, cream the butter together with the flavoring and the sugar for five minutes until the mixture becomes very pale. Add the eggs and continue to beat until blended. Gradually add the flour mixture while beating the mixture at medium speed.

Divide the cake batter equally among the prepared molders. Bake for 35 minutes or until a cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out absolutely clean.

Immediately unmold the cakes and transfer to wire racks. Brush the prepared soaking syrup all over. Allow to stand for at least two hours before refrigerating.

To prepare the syrup, melt the butter over low heat in a small saucepan. Add the sugar and the water and allow to boil. Remove from heat and add the rum. Use immediately.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City and at the Julius Magi Kitchen in Makati. Call 7217735 or e-mail dorothycooking school@yahoo.com.

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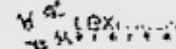
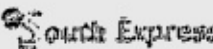
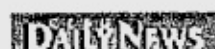
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Cooking and baking demonstration

LEARN new ideas and delicious recipes in "In the Holiday Mood" cooking and baking demonstration on Nov. 22, 1-4 p.m., at the San Miguel head office cafeteria.

Presented by San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, the event will feature culinary

expert Reggie Aspiras and chef Joey Prats. Registration is free but on a first-come, first-served basis. Interested participants can exchange two wrappers of Magnolia Gold Butter, Dari Creme Classic, Magnolia Cream Cheese, Purefoods Fiesta Ham and Purefoods Corned Beef, Monterey and Magnolia Chicken Giniling for an entrance ticket. Call 6719876 local 402, 404 or 407.



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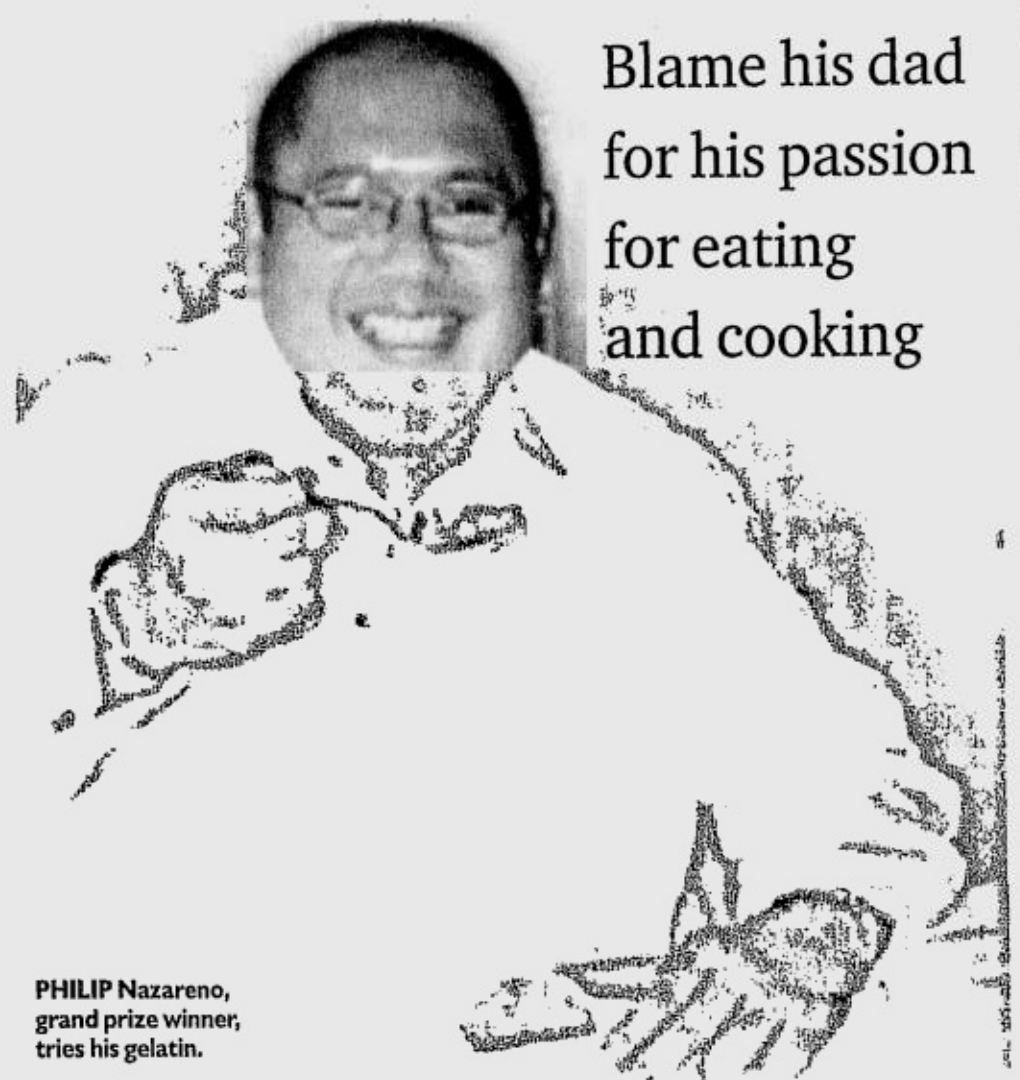
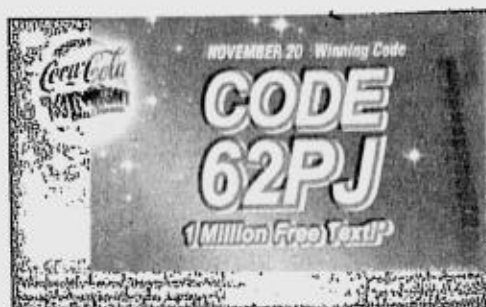
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LIFESTYLE



PHILIP Nazareno, grand prize winner, tries his gelatin.

Food is life

By Philip Z. A. Nazareno

(Editor's Note: This is the grand prize winner in the recently concluded Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Contest 2003.)

"G-E-L-A-T-I-N," my father spelled out in his booming baritone voice. "Whoever knows what that word is will have all of it and none to share with the other," he added. Papa directed his statement to his two sons—me, at age four, and Anthony, my brother, at age three.

Suddenly Yaya Adoracion whispered something to her ward. Simultaneously Anthony yelled, "Gelatin!" I frantically looked around for Nieves, my own yaya. She was nowhere to be found. I became extremely agitated. After all, Jell-O cherry gelatin was, at the time, my ultimate favorite food. Anthony squealed and leapt in triumph. He refused to share the spoils of his victory. I ran to my mother and cried.

I am now 37 years old and overweight at 255 pounds. I love food. I was born to eat. "Not so," says my therapist. The aforementioned episode from my childhood had such negative impact on me, she opines. It was the cataclysmic event that triggered my "unhealthy" eating habits, she insists. At every P800 session I disagreed, and still disagree. I firmly believe that my sense of taste is just much more developed than my other four.

My most cherished memories are relived with the food I ate when the events occurred. I remember people who are most dear to me either by the food they prepared or the food I shared with them.

My mother? She baked spring chicken with butter, parsley and ginger as well as refrigerator cake with almonds and walnuts. My maternal grandmother? She made *pochero* served with Eggplant Ensalada, and *mechado* slow-cooked to perfection. My paternal grandmother? Her feat was *adobo* (1) stewed in vinegar, soy sauce and annatto, (2) thickened with breadcrumbs, and (3) lathered with olive oil. My Ninang Pilar? Godmother prepared thick, spicy *callos*; *lengua* in mushroom sauce; and the most fabulous *leche flan* with a caramel sauce that had just the right hint of bitter-sweetness. Her custard used egg yolks and only fresh, bottled Seleccion or Magnolia milk; no flan made with condensada can ever compare.

For me there is no such thing as "comfort food." For me, food is comfort.

As a lawyer, when I lost the very first case I handled, I drowned my sorrows with the freshest hamachi sashimi at Tsukiji Restaurant. At the age of 22, when my mother and I had one of our most terrible arguments, I found alleviation with the Rotisserie's legendary Caesar's Salad and prime rib with Yorkshire pudding. When my wife left me and filed for an annulment, I found solace in several big, juicy grilled hamburgers—medium rare, that could also probably best describe

Blame his dad for his passion for eating and cooking



WINNERS of the Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award pose with the members of the Awards Committee at Restaurant 9501: (first row, from left) Gina Ylaya, Paolo Mangahas, Felice Sta. Maria (IWFS chair), C. Horatius Mosquera, Pia Luque; (second row, from left) James Deen, Philip Nazareno and Nicolas Lacson.

I took a thick rib-eye from the freezer, defrosted it while I showered, sprinkled salt and pepper on it, and pan-fried it to medium-rare perfection. Then I got a few cloves of garlic and made *sinangag*. Thus started my love affair with the kitchen. My dream of becoming the next Robert Jaworski flew out of the window or rather jumped into the frying pan.

My love of cooking became so great that during my senior year in high school I announced to my family that I wanted to become a chef. My father would hear nothing of it. One must understand that in 1982, parents still had not heard of culinary academics. Reagan was still on his first term, there was still a Soviet Union, the exchange rate was still eight pesos to a dollar, and the word "mall" was not even a figment in Henry Sy's imagination.

I never became a chef. I followed my father's wishes. However, quite often while I am in court or in the midst of negotiations for the restructuring of a corporate client's loan, my mind wanders to what spice or herb might make a great rub for a roast.

Yes, food is my comfort. Food is my life. Thankfully, my family realizes it now. During get-togethers, my relatives often request, nay, order me to cook at least one dish. I always happily oblige.

Just the other night, at my father's decree, I cooked lamb curry at his house. Naturally because it was for him—the man whom I blame for transforming me into such a food-alcoholic—I really outdid myself.

"That was delicious," he exclaimed after his third serving. Then father asked, "What's for dessert?"

"G-E-L-A-T-I-N," I teased him with a wink, then added, "and it's all for me!"

the degree of passion we ended up having for each other.

Culinary affair

Yes, food is my comfort. But such comfort is unmatched when I am the one that prepares the food I eat. Again, blame it on my father.

While in high school I was such a basketball fanatic that, one time, I played with friends until ten o'clock in the evening. When I got home the family had already finished dinner. The cook and the other household help were already asleep. I attempted to wake up the cook to, well, cook for me. But Papa said that if I were so inconsiderate as to come home at an ungodly hour—yes, the gods sleep very early in my father's house—then I should suffer either by going to bed hungry or by cooking my own dinner. The choice was very obvious.

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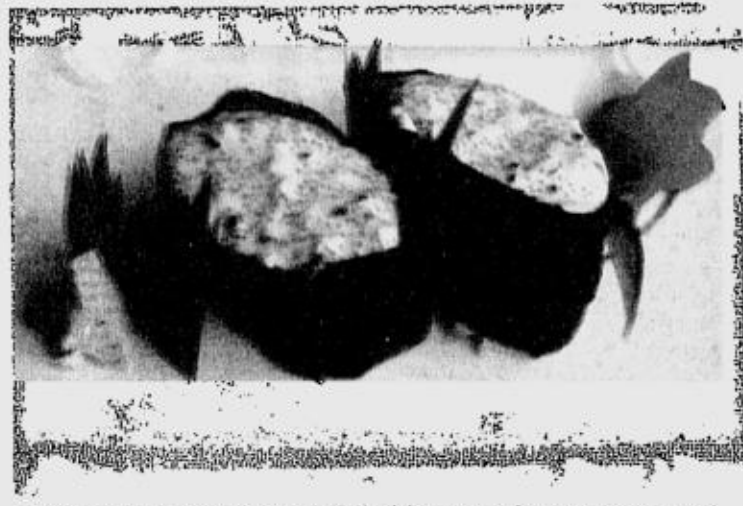
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CALIFORNIA Maki (rolled with crab, mango, Japanese mayo and fish roe)



SIZZLING Beef Teppanyaki



JUMBO Japs Special (rolls stuffed with prawns, Japanese mayo and spring onions, topped with fish roe)

Healthy food, big servings

Jumbo Japs offers generous portions of Japanese staples that are easy on the heart and waistline

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Carpio

ONCE perceived as an exotic cuisine, Japanese cuisine seems to be everywhere these days.

The wild surge in its popularity is linked to its healthfulness. Easy on the heart and waistline, the emphasis in Japanese cooking is on seafood, rice and vegetables, rather than high-cholesterol red meat and dairy foods.

"I think Japanese cuisine is the third most popular food in the country," says Michael Dargani, president of Jumbo Japs.

Dargani put up the casual dining restaurant in January with his wife Nameeta because "we love Japanese food. One can be lean and healthy even if you take Japanese food every day, especially sushi and sashimi, which are super fresh."

"Many people are so health-conscious these days that they're happy with only sushi for a meal. It's light but filling," adds Nameeta, a vegetarian who cooks traditional Japanese fare.

Extensive menu

Jumbo Japs draws customers with an extensive menu of hot, cooked dishes as well as cold, raw foods designed by executive chef Rommel Aguila, who was trained by a Japanese chef and restaurant owner.

Many of the selections are paired with special sauces and the breathtakingly hot and pungent wasabi.

The menu features sushi (worth P40-P70), sashimi (P60-P150) and maki (P80-P110), including seared tuna sashimi (P125) and Jumbo Japs Special (P65, two large rolls stuffed with prawns, Japanese mayo, spring onions and fish roe).

Grilled items include yakitori (P35), gindara teriyaki (P300) and beef teriyaki (P165).

For deep-fried fare, there's Jumbo Prawn Tempura (P200), Tonkatsu (P125) and Tofu Agedashi (P65).

Kamameshi rice (P20-P120), teppanyaki items (P120-P200), sukiyaki (P180 and P350), rice bowls (P125-P150), soup (P30) and salads (P60 and P85) are also available.

For the growing number of vegetarians and health-conscious diners, the restaurant offers Veggie Dumplings (P75), Tofu Steak (P120), Vegetable Tempura (P80), Kakiage



PRAWN Tempura

(P60), and Vegetable Yakimono (P25).

"Many people find Japanese food expensive. So at Jumbo Japs, we offer quality yet affordable food served in generous portions. With P180-200, you can have a good meal of rice, two or three dishes and a refillable drink," says Dargani.

Located at 38 Jupiter corner Planet Sts., Makati, Jumbo Japs (tels. 8990135 and 8996147) does not call itself "jumbo" for nothing.

"We're very proud of our tempura because they're really big prawns—not small shrimps hiding in a lot of batter," says Dargani.

More than a meal

Jumbo Japs also gives diners the opportunity to shop for modern and traditional Japanese artworks, including framed paintings and prints, Ikebana vases, stoneware, crockery, antique scrolls and Japanese obi, which are displayed in the 100-seater restaurant.

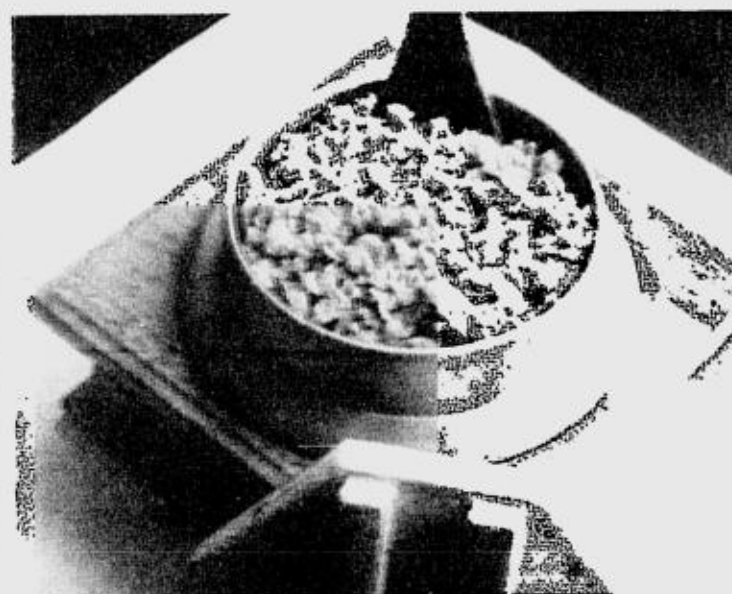
Proceeds from the sale of these artworks will be used to fund the Anawim Center of Mary Mediatrix, a charitable institution focusing on the education, value formation and spiritual empowerment of street children.

Designed by architect Bert del Rosario, the restaurant is painted in yellow and orange, "which make the restaurant modern, refreshing and upbeat," says its proud owners.

Jumbo Japs is open Sunday to Thursday, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 6-10:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, until 11 p.m.

Call 8990135, 8996147 or 0917-5345266.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



TORI Kamameshi (traditional kettle-cooked rice topped with chicken)



(from left) **MICHAEL Dargani** and his wife **Nameeta** with restaurant managers **Sheryn Fuentebella** and **Henry Villamor**



WARM Walnut Fudge Brownie with Vanilla Ice Cream



INTERCON's Chef Cameron McKay (left) and **Australian Embassy's Kerry Tagle** show kids how to make lamingtons.

Poor children treated to an afternoon of fun

IN CELEBRATION of Children's Month and United Nations' Month, the Australian Embassy Manila, in cooperation with Hotel InterContinental Manila and Museo Pambata, brought cheer to the less privileged children of SRD Konkoryo in an event titled "What's Cooking?"

Members of the Australian Embassy staff and their children trooped to Museo Pambata for an afternoon of treats with SRD

Konkoryo kids. Both parents and children enjoyed the interactive Museo Pambata tour, followed by an engaging, but quite difficult, kangaroo origami contest.

The three winners of the contest had the honor of being kitchen helpers to Australian chef Cameron McKay.

Children who participated in the event were given Australian puzzle books.

Reggie Aspiras' holiday cooking

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts cooking class schedules are as follows:

Nov. 21—Gourmet Seafood Holiday Style: Rib Roast with Crab Stuffing, Salt Baked Snapper with Citrus Sauce, Herb Crusted Sea Bass with Wine Sauce, Black Cod with Chorizo Sauce, Black Cod with Crab and Shrimp Sauce, Crisp Fried Soft Shell Crabs with 3 Sauces (Asian Chili, Seafood and Lime) Tempura Soft Shell Crab Salad with Mixed Greens and Fruit Dressing, Whole Baked Norwegian Salmon with three sauces (wasabi, maple and mixed fruit mayonnaise), Homemade Black Pasta with Squid and Basil Olive Oil, Ravioli of Sea Bass with two sauces, Salmon and Caviar and Rustic Tomato Sauce. Bonus: Soup, side dishes and dessert recipes to be demonstrated in class (P2,800+ingredients)

Nov. 22—Pasta Favorite 1: Carbonara, Vongole, Marinara, Bolognese, Primavera, Putanesca, Salmon and Caviar

Nov. 24—Holiday Angus Steaks and Side Dishes: Rib-eye Steaks with Brandy Butter and Mushroom Ragout, Bacon Wrapped Steak with Spinach Cakes, Barbecued Prime Rib Steaks with Tamarind Barbecue Sauce and Marinated Tomato Salad, Grilled Angus with Foie Gras, Morel and Sweet Shallot Glaze, Foie Gras and Truffle Potatoes, Pepper Steaks with Dijon Mushroom Sauce and Vegetables

Nov. 26—Gourmet Filipino 2: Nilagang Pavo with Spring Vegetables, Bulalo Steak Printanier, Buko and Seafood Spring Rolls, Roast French Rack of Lamb with Kamias Jelly and Kamias Rice, Pandan Sago Pudding in Crème Anglaise

Nov. 28—Christmas Cocktails: French Oysters with Grape Sauce, Crisp Oysters with Mango Sauce, Crisp Shrimp Cocktail with two sauces, four Mini Sandwiches (Cold Roast Beef Sandwiches with Horse Radish, Cream Cheese with Fruit Salsa, Fried Mozarella and Chicken and Fruit); Crab and Avocado Salad, Lobster and Fruit Cocktail, Pate Platter: Homemade Pâtés of Sardine, Eggplant, Foie Gras, Mushroom and Country Style; Cheese and Fruit Platter with Homemade Country Bread; Mango and Champagne Slush Punch, Tequila Cocktail, Strawberry Margaritas (P2,800+ingredients)

Nov. 29—Gourmet Pulutan: Incredible Sisig (three kinds: Pork and Chicken, Ox-tail and Lamb), Calamares, (two kinds, Crisp Fried and Tender Bits), Homemade Gourmet Chicharon (Pork, Chicken and Bulaklak and dipping sauces), Gourmet Style Kilawin (three kinds: Dill, Oysters and Salmon), Mixed Barbecue (Pork, Chicken with three marinades)

Dec. 1—Sinfully Delicious Butter-based Cakes: Gooiest Christmas Butter, Praline

Pound Cake, Old-fashioned Butter and Egg, Better Than Sara Lee Butter Pound, Lemon and Herb Pound, Mint and Strawberry Cake

Dec. 3—Reggie's Filipino Christmas Dinner: Soup of Beef and Bone Marrow with Asian Greens, Oven Crisp Lechon with Foie Gras Sauce, Reggie's Sea Bass, Scallop and Asian Vegetable Kare-Kare with Panucha Bagoong, Whole Marinated Fried Crisp Turkey with Dipping Sauces, Mixed Seafood Suman Paella, Brazo de Mercedes with Yema Vanilla Filling

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162 or 6474744. Holiday treats are now available by order only. Mini Liquor Cake Pack: bourbon, whisky grand marnier and wine cake (P400); Mini Rum Cake Gift Pack: mixed nut, dalandan, chocolate truffle and apple banana (P400); individual liquor cakes also available (P400); Reggie's Classic Christmas Killer Caramel Fudge Cake (P275) standard can, minimum 1 dozen; Reggie's Classic Christmas Killer Caramel Fudge Cake (P175/bottle, minimum 1 dozen); Sinfully gooey food for the gods (P400 per can); Salmon and Caviar Cake (P1,000); Delicious Butter Bread (P375).

For the first time, Reggie is also offering a fine selection of Christmas dishes to go. All those who would like to place orders can call, so menus can be personalized based on your requirements.

My mother's 'torta'

By Gina Ylaya

(Editor's Note: The following is the runner up winning essay in the recently concluded Doreen Fernandez Food Writing Tilt 2003)

In our home in Cebu, *torta* is not onelet. It is not fashioned out of beaten egg mixed with ground meat, or slivers of crab, or roasted eggplant. *Torta* is a light cake, evocative of celebration, bearing the definitive stamp of my mother, and the one thing that is hard-wired into my brain as the culinary equivalent of home.

Flour. Lard. Coconut wine called *tuba*. Egg yolk. Sugar. Milk. Anise seeds for aroma. A sprinkling of raisins for color, texture and contrast. And a public schoolteacher who learned to whip all these into gustatory harmony from observing her paternal grandmother in the pre-war years. The basic ingredients of *torta*.

Tuba was the leavening agent. Back then, its source was a nearby *tuba* outlet that had benches outside where as early as dusk the menfolk would gather for male talk lubricated by their preferred evening libation. It had to be guaranteed fresh, sweet and warm and slightly frothy, not the day-old version called *bahal* which took on a vinegary and tart quality. My mother would not trade her *tuba* for your standard baking powder or yeast, despite the eight-hour wait for the dough to rise, because *torta* minus *tuba* would be no different from bakeshop-bought cake.

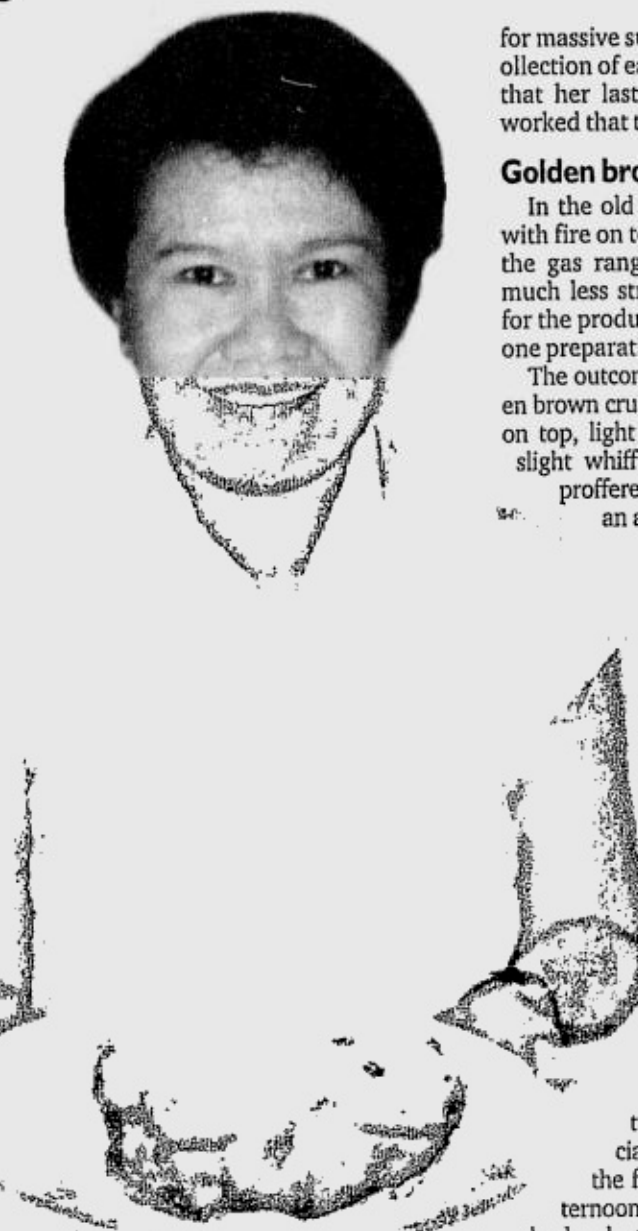
In a time when we are inundated with grim warnings about the artery-clogging effects of lard, you would think that she would have switched to a healthier, and more politically correct, alternative. You think wrong. She insists on lard because of its preservative qualities, arteries be damned.

Like a fiesta

The assembling of all these ingredients on the dining table after dinner, and the retrieval of an assortment of mixing bowls, baking pans, flour sifter, old newspapers and the rest of her baking paraphernalia from kitchen cabinets, gave the house that distinct anticipatory buzz of a fast-approaching town fiesta or Christmas.

My brother and I, both of grade-school age, played a vital part in this elaborate preparation by not getting in the way. As a concession to our presence, my mother grudgingly entrusted us with the final, and least critical, phase of this entire operation.

After the egg yolks and sugar were creamed, milk and *tuba* added in, flour and lard hand-mixed in round circular motions, anise seeds and raisins sprinkled into the mixture, and batter poured into small pans lined



GINA Ylaya, runner-up, shows off the *torta* her mother made.

with greased paper, my brother and I took over—gingerly putting raisins and thin slices of cheese on top of the dough. Our not-so-hidden agenda of course was to eat the leftover raisins. We were repeatedly admonished to steer clear of the dough as the slightest movement would, we were warned, wreak havoc on the fermentation process.

Kitchen emergency

The next morning, my mother would inspect her handiwork and know at one glance if the dough rose to her satisfaction. It had to be just so, not too little as to result in a heavy cake, not too much that the whole mixture would collapse on itself.

One time, extreme measures had to be taken to remedy the *torta* equivalent of the sinking of the Titanic: the dough, perhaps owing to cold weather, sank and failed to ferment through the night. Undaunted, my mother took drastic action and, like a paramedic administering CPR to a patient suffering cardiac arrest, hauled everything out to the front yard

for massive sun exposure. Since I have no recollection of eating flop *torta*, I happily assume that her last ditch ministrations must have worked that time.

Golden brown

In the old days, she baked in a clay oven, with fire on top and below. With the advent of the gas range, this process has been made much less strenuous and tedious and allows for the production of several batches with just one preparation.

The outcome of this entire exercise is a golden brown crust, dusted with a thin film of sugar on top, light and moist on the inside, with a slight whiff of anise emanating from every proffered slice. One sometimes bites into an anise seed or a raisin, and this contrast in taste and texture makes for a delightful discovery with every forkful. It is at once light and rich, simple yet filling, appealing yet I suspect also requiring an acquired taste.

Unabashedly traditional

Its charm comes from its unabashed reliance on traditional ingredients in the face of modern-day alternatives. I urge my mother to package it better for her regular clientele, but it has also dawned on me that her utter lack of concern for presentation is in keeping with this pastry's essence: Substance and tradition taking precedence over form. I associate it with giddy days leading up to the fiesta, as well as lazy December afternoons whose somnolence is sometimes broken by the arrival of unexpected guests.

We serve it to family and friends, my mother's customers serve it to their family and friends, and so my great-grandmother would be pleased that this little piece of sweetness has outlived her all the way to the 21st century.

'It's a light cake that is... hard-wired into my brain as the culinary equivalent of home'

Baking and cooking classes for the holidays

DOROTHY'S Cooking School offers cooking and baking lessons to help you prepare for the holidays. The classes are half-day sessions with the following themes: Nov. 22, Saturday, 9 a.m.-12 nn, Getting Ready for the Holidays: All American 5 Star Brownies, Butterscotch Brownies with Fruits and Nuts, German Chocolate Brownies with Coconut Caramel Topping, Topsy Mexican Brownies, Updated Rocky Road Brownies.

Nov. 24, Monday, 1:30-5 p.m., Desserts 2: Apple Oatmeal Muffins, Baklava Made Easy, Hungarian Nut Horns, Caramel Coffee Cake, Baked Orange Cheesecake.

Nov. 26, Wednesday, 1:30-5 p.m., Sans Rival and Variations: Classic French Buttercream, Chocolate, Pandan, Mango, Caramel, Mocha.

Nov. 28, Friday, 1:30-5 p.m. All Dressed Up for Dinner: Tossed Greens with Fruity

Black Pepper Dressing, Dressed Up Clear Soup, Baked Clams and Mussels with Assorted Toppings, Roast Chicken with Lemon and Herbs, Hawaiian French Cut Roast Porkloin, Party Fish Salad, Green Rice, Mini Decadent Cake with All The Trimmings.

Dec. 1, Monday, 1:30-5 p.m., Gift Basket to Pack 2: Biscotti, Butterscotch Bars, Butter Loaf, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Meringue Mushrooms, Bread and Butter Pudding and how to present them in a basket together with coffee mugs, tableaus and coffee all in 1 package.

Dec. 3, Wednesday, 1:30-5 p.m., Tarts to Wrap: Six tarts to bake and wrap—Caramel Tart, Macapuno Tart., Yema Tart, Durian Tart. Cashew Tart and Triple Nut Tart.

Dec. 5, Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Hands-on Baking: 8 More yeast breads from the oven—Ube Bread, Pandan Macapuno Bread, Asado Bread, Hawaiian Bread, Bubble Loaf with a Chocolate Glaze and Ensaymada.

Call 7217735, Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. or e-mail dorothycookingsschool@yahoo.com.

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RESTAURATEURS, hoteliers, resort and canteen operators and those planning to open their own foodservice business now have a chance to hone their skills when ProActive Center for Training (PACT) holds its Managing a Restaurant/Canteen Seminar-Workshop on Nov. 24-Dec. 4, (excluding weekends), 1-5 p.m., at

Ipanema Bar & Restaurant, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City. Reservations are currently being accepted on a first-come-first-served basis.

The training will cover such topics as planning the concept, menu, location, layout and equipment; hygiene and sanitation; human resource development; and cost control. Foodservice consultants, restaurant and hotel executives, and professors of hotel and restaurant management are tapped to be facilitators. Call 7876370/0916-8226053.

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